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IN PURSUIT OF THE "MAD" MULLAH







[*Photo. by W. Crooke, Edinburgh.*

Captain Malcolm McNeill, D.S.O.

[*Frontispiece.*

IN PURSUIT OF THE "MAD" MULLAH

SERVICE AND SPORT IN THE SOMALI PROTECTORATE

BY

IAN MALCOLM McNEILL, D.S.O.

ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS

WITH A CHAPTER BY

LIEUTENANT A. C. H. DIXON

WEST INDIA REGIMENT

London

C. Arthur Pearson Ltd.

Henrietta Street

1902



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Preface

KNOWING what a large number of books have been written about Somaliland and the shooting to be obtained there, it was after some hesitation that I decided to add another; but I have ventured to do so hoping that an account of the raising of the Somali Levy, and of the subsequent operations against the "Mad" Mullah may make this volume somewhat different from those that have been previously published, and that it may thus prove of interest to people who would not care to read a book dealing only with a subject about which they are probably more or less familiar. At the same time I have mentioned what sport I succeeded in getting while on duty in the country, in order to save the book from being simply an account of an Expedition which, after all, was of but short duration.

I have also added a copy of the 1901 Somaliland Game Regulations that have come into force in consequence of the international agree-



Preface

ment for the preservation of big game in Africa which was signed in London in 1900.

Every word in the following manuscript has been written while under canvas, and more than one chapter while actually on the march from day to day.

Should it be thought that I have gone too much into detail in some cases, *e.g.*, about the organisation and equipment of the Levy, and later on about the daily itinerary of the Expedition, I wish to point out that this book is the history of a novel Expedition into a little-known country. I do not therefore think that the account of how the Somali was trained as a soldier should prove uninteresting, while I feel sure that any one who has visited the Dolbahanta country in Somaliland will be interested in our route.

My thanks are due to Lieutenant A. C. H. Dixon, West India Regiment, for the chapter which he has kindly written for me on the pursuit of the Mullah; also to Lieutenant T. G. Salmon for several photographs.

M. McNEILL.

BURAO, SOMALILAND,
January 10, 1902.

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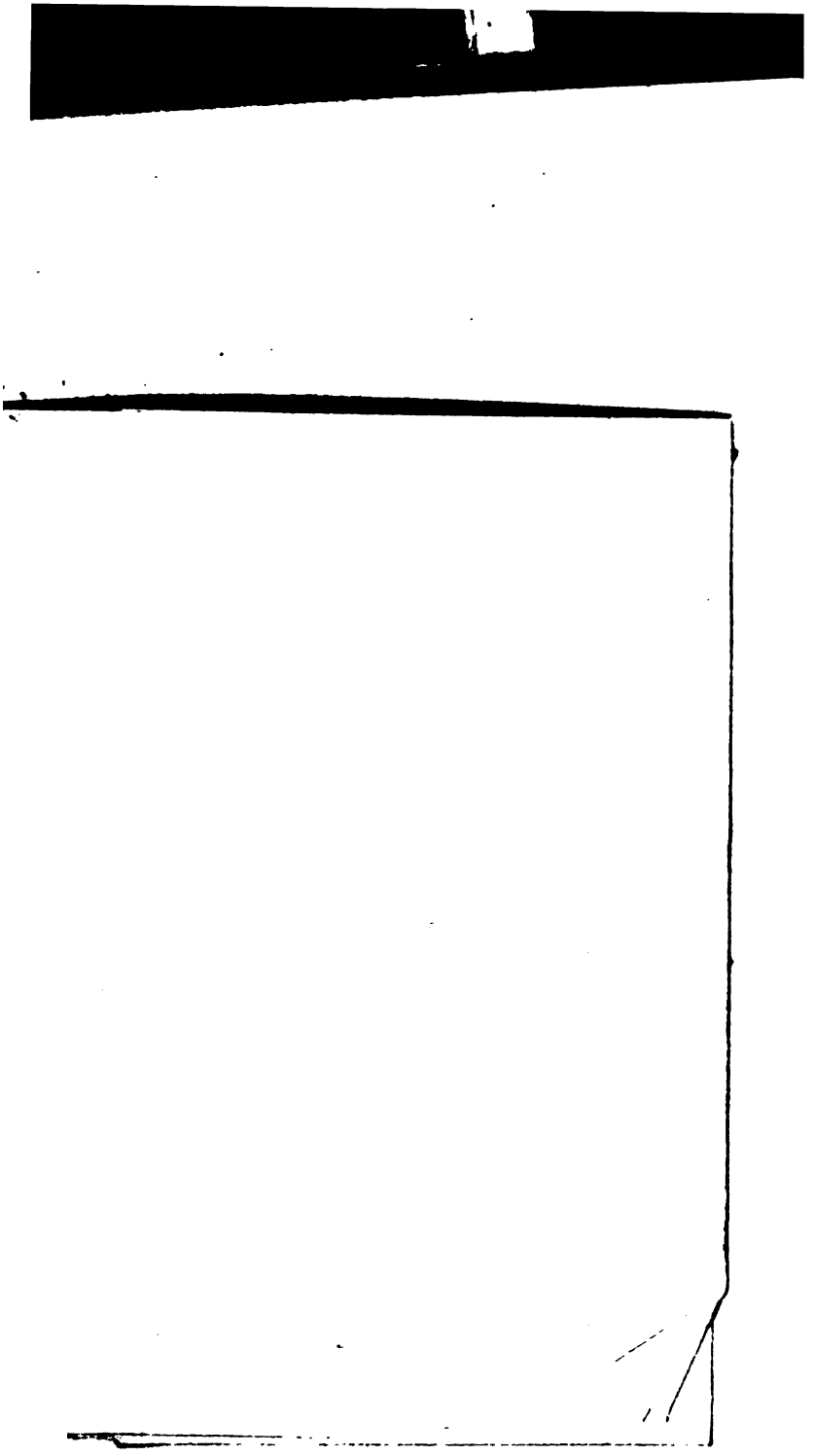
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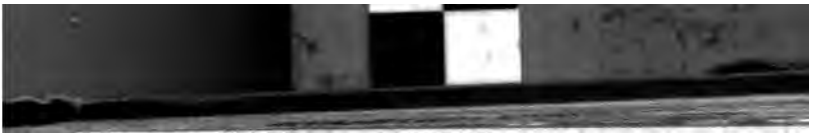
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In Pursuit of the "Mad" Mullah

CHAPTER I

Revisit Somaliland after five years—Appointed to Somaliland Field Force 1901—Changes since 1895, viz., Abyssinian Mission and transfer of the administration to Foreign Office—The "Mad" Mullah: his origin—Jubaland Expedition and consequent confusion with Expedition from Berbera—Abyssinian co-operation.

WHEN I left Somaliland in November, 1895, on the conclusion of my shooting trip, I little thought ever to return. I had enjoyed excellent sport and had obtained specimens of almost all the different species of game to be found there, the dibtag (or Clarke's gazelle) and two varieties of the klipspringer, locally called alicout and baira [1] respectively, being the only exceptions. In one or two other cases, namely,

[1] The baira, which I have since shot, is really quite distinct from the true klipspringer, but it was first described to me as being a sort of alicout.

the geranook (Waller's gazelle) and the dhero, or Somali lowland gazelle (*G. pelzelui*), I had not been lucky enough to get good heads, and I had not fired at any dik dik, not caring to disturb the ground for such a tiny animal—smaller than an English hare. I had done extremely well, however, with all the other kinds of game, and I had no wish to kill any more, nor was it worth my while to revisit the country for the few specimens mentioned. But fate had willed it otherwise, and I was destined, after an interval of over five years, to renew my acquaintance with Somaliland under somewhat different circumstances, and to spend a considerable time there, visiting an entirely new part of the country, and gaining a much more extensive knowledge of the people than I had been able to acquire during the short time I had spent on a shooting expedition.

I had been home for two years, doing duty at the Regimental Depôt and in Ireland, when, on the 22nd of December, 1900, just as I was preparing to return to India, I received notice

from the War Office to the effect that I had been selected for service with the Somaliland Field Force, and that I was to report myself without delay at the Foreign Office. On doing so I was told to proceed at once to Berbera, and there join the Expedition under Colonel E. J. Swayne, Indian Staff Corps, that was being prepared to operate against the "Mad" Mullah—Haji Mahomed Abdullah. Leaving London on the 4th of January, 1901, I reached Aden on the 14th and Berbera on the 22nd.

More than one important change had taken place in Somaliland since 1895.

In 1897 the Abyssinian Mission, under Mr. Rennell Rodd, had visited King Menelik, with the result that a large tract of Somaliland formerly under British protection had been handed over to the Abyssinians. An account of this mission will be found in "Seventeen Trips to Somaliland," by Major Swayne, R.E., and a full description in a book entitled, "With the Mission to Menelik," by Major Count Gleichen, Grenadier Guards.

In Pursuit of

In 1898 the control of British Somaliland had passed from the Indian Government to the Foreign Office. Prior to this the country had been administered from India through an Indian Political Officer at Aden called "The Political Resident for the Somali Coast," assisted by residents at Zaila, Bulhar and Berbera. When the Foreign Office took over the country a Consul-General was appointed at Berbera, assisted by Vice-Consuls at Berbera, Zaila and Bulhar, and the "Somali Coast Protectorate," as it was now called, was administered direct from home through the Consul-General—Colonel Hayes Sadler.

Shortly after this transfer, *i.e.*, in 1899, the so-called "Mad" Mullah began to appear on the scene. By name Mahomed Abdullah, and belonging to the Habr Suleiman section of the Ogaden tribe in the south-west of the Somali country, he had married into the Ali Gheri, one of the Dolbahanta tribes in the south-east of the British Protectorate, and had thus extended his influence from Abyssinia on the west to the borders of Italian Somaliland on



the east. Having made several pilgrimages to Mecca, he returned to his native country with a great reputation for wisdom and holiness, and speedily began to make his presence felt. At first he appears to have been friendly to the British Government, but in a short time he quarrelled with some of the tribes in our Protectorate, and shortly afterwards began to pillage the country and to interfere greatly with the trade from the interior to the coast. In March, 1900, he attacked, with a large force, an Abyssinian frontier outpost near Jig Jigga, but was completely defeated, being repulsed with heavy loss which the Abyssinians stated amounted to 2,800 in killed alone. His followers, however, behaved with the greatest gallantry, charging right up to the Abyssinian defences, in several places getting so close that they seized the rifles of the defenders before being shot down. Some time after this reverse he appears to have left the Ogaden country, going eastwards into the Dolbahanta territory, which he made his subsequent headquarters.

From the first, however, he had been steadily collecting rifles and ammunition, and, though defeated by the Abyssinians, he does not appear to have lost much, either in prestige or in the number of his followers, having explained away their defeat by saying that they had neglected to conform to certain of his religious injunctions.

The Mullah's attack on the Abyssinians was made in the daytime, when the conditions were all in favour of the latter, who had a plentiful supply of rifles and ammunition and were fighting under cover. They seem to have been greatly impressed by the bravery of the Somalis, while the latter appear to have considered that their attack would have been successful had it been made under cover of darkness.

Towards the end of June, 1900, Mahomed Abdullah had, by all accounts, made his position even stronger than before his defeat in March, and he practically dominated the whole of the southern portion of our Protectorate.



About this time King Menelik of Abyssinia appears to have proposed a combined British and Abyssinian Expedition against him, and in consequence of this offer of assistance, and the state of alarm and dissatisfaction amongst the tribes under our protection, strong representations were made to the home Government on the subject, but, owing apparently to the South African War, the Expedition was delayed until November, when the formal sanction for the raising of a Somali Levy was granted.

Just at the time—January, 1901—when we began to organise the Somaliland Field Force at Berbera, another Expedition was being fitted out at Kismayu in Jubaland, British East Africa, for the punishment of a tribe of Ogaden Somalis who had murdered Mr. Jenner, the Assistant Commissioner, towards the end of the previous year. This was called "The Jubaland Expedition," and was under the command of Colonel Ternan, D.S.O. It was perfectly distinct from our Expedition, which started from Berbera under the com-

mand of Lieutenant-Colonel Swayne, and, as a matter of fact, the Jubaland force started some time before we did. There was, nevertheless, much confusion at home between the two Expeditions, mainly arising, I fancy, from the fact that the operations of both forces were directed against *Somalis*—Jubaland being the southern limit of the Somali-speaking tribes. This confusion was, of course, mostly amongst private individuals, but it caused us all much inconvenience and some delay in our preparations, as not only did many letters and parcels go to Kismayu instead of to Berbera, but a certain amount of Government stores, which had been sent out from home to us, overcarried at Aden and were taken on to Jubaland, from which place they had to be sent back again.

So great was the confusion between the two Expeditions that in some cases wrong instructions were given to Special Service Officers, some of whom, though intended to go to Berbera, were actually sent to Kismayu.

Another circumstance, which tended still



further to increase the confusion at home between the two Expeditions, was this: The Abyssinians had arranged to send a large force eastwards from their country to operate against the Mullah in conjunction with us, and two British officers—Major the Hon. A. H. Hanbury Tracy and Captain R. P. Cobbold—had gone out from home to accompany the Abyssinian army. Thus our Expedition, though officially known as "The Somaliland Field Force," was almost invariably referred to by the English papers as "The Anglo-Abyssinian Expedition." When not called by this name it was sometimes alluded to by its official title and sometimes called "The Northern Somaliland Expedition." Small wonder was it, therefore, that the British public got somewhat mixed as to operations against Somalis in "North-East Africa," the latter expression being a sort of generic term used by the newspapers to describe the field of operations of both forces.

CHAPTER II

Expedition against Mullah determined on—No force then available—Military police—Decision as to nature of force—Command given to Colonel Swayne—Composition, numbers, equipment, and personnel of Somaliland Field Force—Names of officers—Variety of men and arms composing force.

ABOUT the end of 1900 it was decided to send an Expedition against the Mullah, whose continued depredations and excesses committed against tribes under British protection had brought about a state of things which could no longer be tolerated. The chief difficulty lay in the fact that no force existed on the coast or in the interior of Somaliland, there being only small bodies of Civil and Military Police with headquarters at Berbera, and detachments at Zaila and Bulhar and in one or two places inland. The Military Police numbered about 130 men, of whom

about 50 were mounted on camels, the remainder being on foot. The whole were under command of Captain E. J. Swayne, Indian Staff Corps, who, in company with his brother, Major Swayne, R.E., had made several exploring and big game hunting trips into the interior of the country at a time when Somaliland was quite a *terra incognita.*

At first it was proposed to send Indian troops with a certain number of friendly Somalis to help, but Captain Swayne was opposed to this, maintaining that the latter were far more suitable for the work in hand, being accustomed to cover long distances without water, and to do with but little food and a minimum of transport, whereas Indian troops would require much more elaborate arrangements to enable them to cross the waterless desert of the Haud, besides costing considerably more. After some discussion it was decided to form a Levy of Somalis, with a few Indian Regulars to act as Drill Instructors, Section Commanders, Pay and Quartermaster Sergeants, &c.

Captain Swayne was given command of the Levy, with the local rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and twenty British officers were sent from home and from India to assist him in raising the men and commanding them afterwards. Four Indian non-commissioned officers were sent over from the 5th Bombay Infantry at Aden, to start drilling the Somali recruits at once, and a large proportion of the Military Police were attached to the Levy in order that there should be a few men who had at least some idea as to what drill and discipline meant. And here I may mention that, what with one delay and another, the Indian contingent, numbering about 50, did not arrive till the middle of April, by which time the Expedition was nearly ready to start, so that the whole duty of raising, drilling, equipping, and paying some 1,500 raw Somalis (none of whom had the slightest idea of discipline) fell on the British officers, helped to a certain extent by the four Indian non-commissioned officers from Aden, and by the men of the Coast Police who were appointed Section Commanders. As there

were only two orderly-room clerks and one ration clerk (all natives) for the whole force, the amount of work, both clerical and otherwise (especially the former), that fell to our lot before the Expedition was ready to start may more easily be imagined than described.

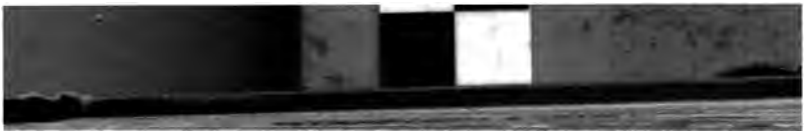
The composition of the force was fixed at 1,500 men, viz., 1,000 Infantry, 400 horsemen, and 100 Camel Sowars. The Infantry and the Camel Corps were recruited without very much difficulty, but it was found impossible to raise the full number of horsemen. The total of 1,500 men was, however, made up by recruiting an extra company of Infantry, and a body of about 100 men specially detailed for transport work. This Transport Section was further strengthened by 60 men from two of the Infantry companies, thus giving a force of over 150 drilled and armed men, who would be always with the transport in case of any emergency. When the Expedition actually started a certain number of spearmen, drawn from friendly tribes, were employed to assist in driving the camels, and our mounted troops

were also supplemented from time to time by a very uncertain number of tribal horsemen, who, perhaps, proved themselves of some very slight use for scouting purposes.

The whole force, mounted troops and Infantry alike, were armed with ·303 Martini-Enfield rifles and the old-fashioned long triangular bayonets. As equipment every man carried a water-bottle and haversack, and, when in the Haud, a small goat-skin water-bag. About 1,000 men carried bandoliers, the remainder having cartridge pouches and belts. The tribal horsemen, and all men employed to help in transport work, carried spears and shields, while an occasional Midgan might have been seen armed with bow and arrows.

We also had one ·303 and two ·450 Maxims. The former, being the lightest, always accompanied the mounted troops, while each Infantry Corps had one ·450. These guns were worked entirely by specially drilled Somalis.

Lieutenant-Colonel E. J. Swayne was in command of the whole force, Brevet-Major



W. Beynon, D.S.O., Indian Staff Corps, being second in command. The whole of the mounted branch was also directly under Major Beynon, the horsemen being commanded by Captain W. B. Merewether, Indian Staff Corps, and the Camel Corps by Captain C. M. D. Bruce, Royal Field Artillery.

The Infantry were divided into two corps of 500 men each, the first corps under Captain G. E. Phillips, Royal Engineers, and the second under Captain M. McNeill, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Captain D. A. Friederichs, Royal Engineers, was appointed Adjutant and Quartermaster, and the names of the other officers were:—

Lieutenant C. H. Taylor, York and Lancaster Regiment.

,, F. A. Dickinson, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

,, H. du B. O'Neill and H. Younghusband, the Bedfordshire Regiment.

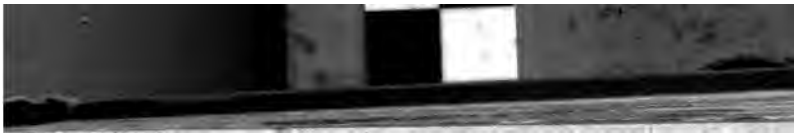
,, A. C. H. Dixon, West India Regiment.

In Pursuit of

Lieutenant L. de Saumarez, King's Royal Rifle Corps.
,, A. J. Lamprey, Royal Dublin Fusiliers.
,, L. Murray, East Surrey Regiment.
,, H. W. B. Thorp, Yorkshire Light Infantry.
,, C. H. R. Stigand, Royal West Kent Regiment.
,, T. G. Salmon, 3rd Battalion West York Regiment.
,, H. F. Byrne, York and Lancaster Regiment.
,, E. V. Walshe, Waterford Artillery.

The last two officers belonged to the 2nd Battalion Central Africa Regiment, which had been stationed in Somaliland up to a short time previously, and had then left to take part in the Expedition under Sir John Wilcocks for the relief of Coomassie. Lieutenants Byrne and Walshe had been kept to assist in raising the Levy.

Captain A. G. G. Sharp (the Leinster Regiment), attached to the East Africa Rifles,



joined us in May, and brought up the first convoy from Burao to the front.

Captain H. Boulton, Indian Medical Service, was the medical officer in charge.

Such, then, was the composition of the Somaliland Field Force—a composite regiment of mounted men, Infantry, and Transport Corps, which, on January 1, 1901, did not exist, but which started from Burao on the 22nd of May to cross the waterless Haud and to attack the Mullah in the midst of his fanatical followers. I think it speaks well for the British officers that, in the space of a little over four months, they should have accomplished so much with men like the Somalis, who, previous to this, had not the very slightest idea of military life, or work, or anything connected with it.

For such a comparatively small force it is seldom, in all probability, that the personnel of which it was composed could show a greater variety—both amongst its commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and in its rank and file. British officers of the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery, and from Regular and

Militia regiments at home, from South Africa, from East and from West Africa, from British regiments in India and Ceylon, and from the Indian Staff Corps, from Central Africa, and from Aden. Indian non-commissioned officers and men from the Punjab, from the North-West, from Bombay and from Madras, Havildars of the Military Police from the Soudan, and Somali native officers, non-commissioned officers and men from almost every tribe in the British Protectorate.

When on the march what a variety of men and arms one could see! Scouting in front would be the Camel Corps or Mounted Infantry of the Levy, armed with ·303 rifles firing smokeless powder, and, close behind them on trotting camels, the latest engine of destruction in the shape of a ·303 Maxim, while alongside the machine gun would be riding some tribal horsemen armed with spears and shields.

A short distance in rear would come a company of Somalis marching in fours with a British officer at its head, and probably another



Maxim a short way behind. After those a string of camels, their escort formed of Levy men armed with rifles, spearmen with spears and shields, and perhaps, somewhere in the near vicinity, a few Midgans carrying bows and arrows.

A cloud of dust in the rear, rapidly drawing nearer, and up gallop some three or four Somali scouts, their white tobes flying in the air and their horses' bridles gaily caparisoned with various coloured tassels. Wildly waving spear or shield they advance at full gallop and suddenly pull up their horses with their powerful and cruel bits, stopping dead in two or three lengths.

Such a scene as this I have frequently witnessed while on the march with the Expedition, yet I fancy such a combination of machine guns and bows and arrows, smokeless powder, rifles and spears and shields, is not often to be seen, even in Africa.

And yet all these men are marching for the one end—the service of the Sirkal (Government); and the same Somalis, who worked the

In Pursuit of the "Mad" Mullah

Maxim guns at Sanala, and at Firdiddin in June and July, were less than nine months before rejoicing in the acquisition of a spear, or bargaining for the possession of a new oryx-hide shield.

CHAPTER III

Recruiting—Up-country stations at Hargeisa, Adadleh, and Burao—General system of distributing and pushing forward the force when ready—Difficulties in regard to sickness and transport — Large number of camels required—Description of Haud district—Delay in arrival of stores and equipment—Medical arrangements and medicines—Heavy work at Berbera—Sport near Berbera—Start from the coast—Sport *en route*—Reach Adadleh—Work there—Leave Adadleh—Arrive at Eyl Humo—Sport at Adadleh.

WHEN I arrived at Berbera on the 22nd of January, 1901, about 400 recruits had been enlisted, most of whom had been sent up country to Adadleh and Hargeisa. It was necessary to keep some troops at the latter place, partly to watch the Rer Ali, a tribe to the southward from whom trouble was expected, and partly because round Hargeisa was a district in which we hoped to enlist a fair number of recruits, both horsemen and foot soldiers, from the neighbouring tribes—more particularly from the Habr Awl.

Adadleh, however, was the principal up-country station at that time. Lying as it does about two days' march to the east of Hargeisa, and about four to the north-west of Burao, being also only two from Berbera, it formed a very good central base at which to collect men and stores. The Central African Regiment, when in Somaliland, had been stationed there, and had built some mud huts and a stone blockhouse. To this place, therefore, we sent up men on enlistment and stores on arrival, and as the former gradually became trained, the companies completed with stores and equipment were sent on to Burao, there to finish their training as far as possible and to be prepared to start from that place on the final advance when everything should be ready.

Most of the horsemen that we succeeded in raising were enlisted near Hargeisa, and when formed into troops, came down to Adadleh, whence they were sent on to where there was somewhat better grazing, eventually joining us at Burao.

The Camel Corps remained at Dubar, near



[*Photo. by Author.*

Checking Stores at Adadleh.

[*To face page 22.*





Berbera, most of the time, and did a considerable part of their training in the neighbourhood. All their Arab riding camels had to be purchased in Aden and shipped over (to Berbera) as there are no riding camels to be got in Somaliland.

The foregoing will give a general idea of the system on which the Levy was raised, but it must not be imagined that all was plain sailing. On the contrary, the difficulties which Colonel Swayne and his officers had to contend with were manifold, the greatest, perhaps, being the unusual amount of sickness prevalent at the time.

As every one who has been on a shooting trip in the country well knows, Somaliland is proverbial for its healthiness, but this winter (1900–1901) was quite the most unhealthy season ever known, both on the coast and inland. The consequence was that a large number of recruits, many of them partially drilled, had to be discharged, and new men taken on in their place. This occurred not only on the coast, but also at Hargeisa and Adadleh,

though of course it was much worse at Berbera. Conditions improved as we got the men up country, especially when the weather got warmer, but it was not till the end of April that we succeeded in weeding out all the weakly ones. After we had once started from Burao we had no sickness at all, but the large number of men that were discharged while we were raising the Levy delayed us considerably, as, of course, all the time spent on their training was completely thrown away, and the new men enlisted to fill their places had to be drilled from the very first. Nor were the Somalis the only ones who suffered from the general unhealthiness of the season—the white men also felt it, and almost every officer of the force had a certain amount of fever, either at Berbera or up country, before we started; but, like the Somalis, when once we were on the move, every one of us was perfectly fit.

Sickness, moreover, was not the only thing that caused delay; there were several other circumstances that all combined to hamper us —the transport question for one.



the "Mad" Mullah

Every one who has been in Somaliland will at once understand what a large number of camels was necessary to transport a force of 1,500 men across the Haud. For the benefit of those who do not know the country it is necessary to explain that the Haud is a waterless tract stretching almost from the Indian Ocean on the east to Abyssinia on the west. Its breadth varies, but in some parts it is over a hundred and fifty miles across, and it lies about a hundred miles inland due south from the coast. During the rainy season there is excellent grazing and in parts of this district some pools of rain-water, but during the rest of the year it is practically uninhabitable owing to want of water—permanent wells being a great distance apart. We calculated by making long marches on being able to get water every four days, but it was necessary to have a reserve supply, so at least five days' water had to be *carried* for over 1,500 men, about 350 horses, and nearly 150 riding camels. Our transport camels could go without drinking from one watering-place to another.

To carry this water, in addition to all our stores, equipment, and ammunition, it was necessary to collect at least 700 camels. This in itself was no light task, and its difficulty was further increased by the fact that there was a great scarcity of good loading camels at that time. Prices consequently ran very high, burden camels fetching as much as 55 to 60 rupees each, and even more—about double the price I paid for mine in 1895. Then when the camels had been bought we had great trouble in keeping them in condition. As the early spring rains almost entirely failed in 1901 —at any rate in Northern Somaliland— our transport animals had to be sent very far afield to get proper grazing, and this necessitated men of the Levy being detailed to look after them, thus interfering very considerably with the recruits' training. I may safely say that in the four months from the 22nd of January, the day I landed at Berbera, to the 22nd of May, the day we left Burao, considerably more than half the



time was spent by most of the men in grazing camels, instead of in drill and musketry.

Our stores and equipment, too, were long in arriving—some, in fact, did not get to us till April. This was owing partly to the fact that there is no direct steamship service to Berbera. Everything has to be trans-shipped at Aden into small coasting steamers which only run once a week to Berbera, and even then touch first at Zaila and Bulhar.

As already mentioned, great delay also occurred in the arrival of the Indian troops, nearly all the drill and musketry having to be done without any proper instructors, except the four Indian non-commissioned officers from Aden. These men were able to assist only in the preliminary training at Berbera, and could not be spared to go up country, being required to look after stores at the base. As our medical officer and the hospital assistants also came from India, it was very difficult to attend to the sick men, there being only one doctor in the Protectorate.

He was stationed at Berbera, and afterwards came up to Adadleh before we went on to Burao, but for many days at more than one station we were without a medical officer, or even an hospital assistant, and the sick had to be attended to by their company officers out of what private supply of medicines they possessed, this too in an unusually unhealthy season. At Eyl Humo, a camel grazing camp, at which were collected the head-quarters of the Expedition, about 9 British officers and between 600 and 700 men, and where we remained for three weeks, we were without any medical attendance at all for eighteen days.

I remained on the coast from the 22nd of January till the 9th of March, when I left for Adadleh. By that date seven out of the eight Infantry companies had been nearly completed, while the eighth was being recruited and drilled at Hargeisa: it was finally brought up to strength early in April. While I was at Berbera we were all fully occupied in enlisting the men, and in the

subsequent work of paying them before going up country, equipping them as far as possible, marking their kits, making up their accounts, and the thousand and one things that have to be done on raising a Levy such as ours. The want of clerks was very severely felt, as all this clerical work, including even the marking of the men's kits, fell on the officers, the result being that it was quite impossible to superintend the drilling of the recruits, all our time being taken up in office work and in counting stores and despatching caravans up country. The men were sent off as fast as possible, *i.e.*, whenever a section of thirty was complete, and their training was taken in hand by the officers already at Hargeisa and Adadleh, and of course no one was kept on the coast longer than was necessary, but it was nearly the end of March before the headquarters were able to leave for Adadleh.

There are a few lowland gazelle (*Gazella pelzelui*) on the plain close to Berbera, and as I had not previously got a good specimen

I went after them occasionally in the early mornings or evenings, getting six in all, one of them a very nice head with horns 12¼ inches in length, two others being nearly 11 inches. This is all the shooting to be got near Berbera, but even had there been more I would not have had much time for it. These gazelle were fairly numerous, and not very difficult to approach, considering that they were to be found within three or four miles of the town, but good heads were not easy to obtain.

Leaving Berbera on the evening of March 9th, I slept that night at Jiftu, about nine miles distant, and started at daybreak the next morning, reaching Derha Godleh, twenty-three miles, at midday. At this place we came on the first water to be found on this route after leaving the coast, and the march is consequently a very trying one, as both men and animals are generally "soft" on starting, while the road is very stony, and a gradual ascent begins shortly after leaving Berbera. The best way is to



start in the evening and march till about midnight, halting for a few hours at Jiftu, nine miles, or at Nassiya, sixteen miles, till daylight: Derha Godleh can then be reached while still fairly cool, as it is always very hot in the Maritime plain when once the sun gets well up. There are a few gazelle and dik dik to be found along the caravan route, but they are very wild and hard to get near.

I left Derha Godleh about 4 p.m. on the 10th and reached Hamas the same evening—about nine miles further on. Starting at dawn the next morning and going on ahead of the caravan, I came on a small herd of plateau gazelle (*Gazella spekei*) and shot one with fair horns. This was the first specimen I had got of this variety, which differs from that to be found nearer the coast in that it has a big loose fold of skin on the bridge of the nose, just above the nostrils, giving it a somewhat comical appearance. I hardly expected to find it so near Berbera, so was very pleased at adding

a new variety to my collection. A short distance further on I saw another herd about half a mile to the left of the track. There were two good bucks amongst them, and as the ground was intersected by ravines, I managed to get close up and secured another. His horns were thicker than those of the first, though not so long, but unluckily one was broken off short, which spoilt what would otherwise have been a nice head.

I reached Lafarug shortly before noon, and in the afternoon .went on to Mandera, where I camped for the night. During this march I shot four dik dik. As I had not got any of these tiny antelopes during my shooting trip, this made the second new species I had secured in one day, and I was correspondingly pleased with myself.

Shortly after leaving Hamas, the country, hitherto uninteresting, becomes more broken, and several small hills and prominent features now come into view which I well remembered having passed when I started nearly six years before on a shooting ex-



pedition, which lasted for perhaps the four happiest months of my life. The sight of these landmarks brought back to my mind, as clearly as if it had been yesterday, the day I marched over this same ground in 1895, and I could only hope that this, my second journey into Somaliland, though made under such different conditions, might prove as successful as my first. Certainly my sport on this day, the 10th of March, seemed to augur well.

A little rain fell that night, and next morning when we started soon after daybreak to ascend the Jeratto Pass, the whole of the Gobi range of hills before me was enshrouded in white, fleecy mist, while behind me the green trees of the Mandera jungle formed a most pleasing contrast to the dry and arid stony plains over which we had just been marching. As the sun rose over Gan Libah, the highest point of the range, the effect was very fine, and formed quite the best bit of scenery I had yet beheld in Somaliland.

The Jeratto Pass takes one in about three

miles from the low country, or Guban, to the high country, or Ogo, and the change in temperature and general surroundings is very noticeable. Instead of the hot wind and glare of the Maritime plain, a fresh, cool breeze was blowing, and the country round about was covered with scrub jungle. Altogether I almost felt as if I had been transported into a different land, and I arrived at Adadleh about half-past ten with an appetite that was impossible on the coast.

Our time at Adadleh was fully occupied, as all the musketry had to be done here, there being no butts at Berbera. None of my men had ever fired a rifle before, so our time on the ranges was fully taken up in trying to teach them to shoot, and in seeing that no accidents occurred. Stores also kept coming in daily, and all these had to be sorted out and either sent on to Burao or handed over to companies or corps; so altogether we were quite as busy as at Berbera—if not more so.

Whilst in this camp I met an old acquaintance, whom I was delighted to see again—



Azkar Gerard, now chief of the Habr Awl tribe. He had accompanied me on my previous trip when I was passing through his country, and his help had proved simply invaluable. He and his brother, Deria Gerard, had brought all their knowledge of the country to bear in getting me sport, and had assisted me in every possible manner, with the very satisfactory result that I shot seven lions in a little over a fortnight. When working my way back in the direction of the coast, towards the close of my leave, Azkar had again come to meet me, and it was in a great part due to his help that I got the one elephant I managed to secure on that trip.

Both Azkar Gerard and his brother Deria—the latter a Jemadar in the Mounted Infantry—came to Adadleh to see Colonel Swayne, and to give what assistance they could to the Government. I had several long talks with them in my tent, and was delighted to hear that there was still plenty of sport to be found in their country.

On the 16th of April we vacated Adadleh,

leaving what stores we did not require in a stone blockhouse under charge of a guard of twelve men.

On the 19th we reached Eyl Humo, about thirty miles north-west of Burao, and as the grazing there was very good, Colonel Swayne resolved to halt for some days, in order to give the camels as much feeding as was possible before starting for Burao, and also to enable the officers to complete, as far as they could, the training of their men—a duty which had been sadly interfered with heretofore, owing to the amount of clerking and store-keeping work we all had to do.

This place was certainly the pleasantest spot we had yet been encamped in, and the grazing being good, our transport animals improved greatly in condition during the time we remained there, from the 19th of April till the 12th of May.

I got but little sport at Adadleh. There were a few geranook and dhero round about, but they were as wild as hawks, owing to the continued occupation of the place by the



Central African Regiment and the Somali Levy. I went out on a few occasions in the morning and evening, but only succeeded in getting one dhero. He was, however, the best specimen I had yet got of the plateau species, his horns being 11 inches long.

Before leaving Adadleh my sporting rifles arrived from home, at which I was greatly pleased, as hitherto I had done all my shooting with one of the men's Martini-Enfields. These, with their coarse sights and heavy pull-off were not at all adapted for game shooting—especially for running shots—but they were extremely accurate, and better rifles for a Levy such as ours it would have been impossible to find.

CHAPTER IV

Get news of lions—A long distance away—Difficulty about long enough leave—Decide to go after dibtag and try off-chance of lions—Start—Shoot a dhero—News of lions quite close—Their devastations—Sit up at night—Interesting night—Four lions close to Zariba—Wound one—Follow him up and get him next morning—Start after others—One charges my men—Kill him, find the other; turn him out of long grass—Start after dibtag.

IT was while at this grazing camp, Eyl Humo, where, as already mentioned, we remained some time, that I had a great stroke of luck in the way of sport.

On the 22nd of April I got news of lions (reports varied as to their number) at a spot some way off, variously estimated at from four to eight hours' distant. I did not hear of this till the afternoon, but the same evening I sent off two reliable men on horseback to see what truth there was in this "Khabar," and to try, if

possible to locate the lions, approximately, for me. We still had a lot to do in the way of drilling our men, and as it was impossible to get away for long I could not afford to waste valuable leave in going after what might, after all, turn out to be only a rumour. These men returned late the following evening, the 23rd, and reported having covered much ground in the course of the day before they found fresh lion tracks, which they eventually did, at a place about thirty miles distant. These tracks they had followed till about 1 p.m. without getting a sight of the lions, and as the tracks were then leading towards a somewhat dense jungle of bush, some six or eight miles further on, they had left the spoor and come back to report what they had seen.

This news was good—so far as it went. Had I been on a shooting trip I would have been quite satisfied to start off at once, as the lions were evidently there all right. At the same time it was clear that they were on the move, as the place where their tracks had been found was a good way from where they were

first reported to have been seen. Further careful inquiries from the two horsemen confirmed my views, viz., that these lions were on the move, and apparently at that time working between three different places, and in a bit of country with a lot of thick thorn jungle in most places. My men also told me that they had seen a few old tracks, which seemed to point to their having been in that neighbourhood for some time. Taking all things into consideration, and judging from my previous experience of lion-hunting in this country, it was pretty clear that this was as good a chance of getting one (or possibly more than one) as I could expect. Time to work the ground was, however, absolutely necessary, and to do this properly I considered at least a week *on the ground* essential. I might, with luck, find the lions much sooner, but there was no certainty about it; in seven or eight days, however, I could thoroughly examine the ground, and if I had not found them at the end of this time I would, at least, have a pretty good idea as to where the lions were (if still in the



neighbourhood), and whether it was worth while going after them any more. This was the conclusion I came to after thinking over the whole matter from a shooting point of view. Time, however, was my chief difficulty. I knew I could not get away for more than two or three days, and as the lions were thirty miles distant, my whole time would have been spent in going there and back with only a few hours on the ground. At the same time there were the lions right enough, and as I knew I could get two or three days' leave, it seemed a great pity to lose any possible chance, more especially as I knew that it would be quite impossible to get away once we left this camp.

Now I had in my employment, as Syce and Shikari, a man called Gulaid Liban, who knew this part of the country. In his capacity as Shikari he had accompanied me when I went after dhero—the only shooting I had got so far —and up to the present he had done all right, having good eyesight and a fair knowledge of the sport obtainable in the country we had passed through. Of him more anon ; in the

meantime I will only say that this was all the experience I had had of him, never having had him with me when after large or dangerous game. This man now told me that he knew of a place about fifteen miles distant, and in the direct route to the ground where the lions were, where there were a certain number of dibtag (Clarke's gazelle). As I had never even seen this animal on my previous shooting trip, I was very anxious to get a specimen, so I decided to go out to this place and try for one; and as I would be only fifteen miles or so from where the lions were, I determined to send on a man on horseback in hopes of getting some reliable news which would make it worth my while trying for them. This was the best arrangement I could make under the circumstances, and it received the ready sanction of the Commandant (himself a great Shikari), with the further permission to remain away two more days if I got really reliable "Khabar" of the lions. Accordingly I started off soon after noon on the 24th of April with great hope of getting a specimen of dibtag, but



without any great expectation of falling in with the larger game.

I made a good beginning, as I shot a dhero (*Gazella spekei*) with a very fair head before I had left the camp half an hour. After this I walked on steadily for an hour without seeing anything, and then sat down under a shady tree to rest for a few minutes till my camels came up, which they did in about a quarter of an hour. And now began one of the biggest bits of luck I have ever experienced when big game hunting.

While sitting under the tree a man on horseback came up at a gallop and told us that the previous night four lions had raided his Karia, killing three camels and one man. The spot where this had occurred was not more than about five miles from where I was making for, nor more than sixteen or seventeen miles from our camel-grazing camp, as the route branched off somewhat to the right from the direction in which we had hitherto been going. On hearing this, I at once sent on the man who had brought this information, together with one of

my own men on horseback, with instructions to go as hard as they could and to build a Zariba for me to sit up in that night. I followed at once on my trotting camel, taking Gulaid Liban with me, while my camels went straight on to their original destination, as we knew they would get water there, besides which I did not care to have them anywhere near my Zariba that night. I arrived at the Karia about 5.40 p.m., and found all the inhabitants had fled —camels, cattle, sheep, and everything. The whole place presented a very desolate appearance: vultures on the surrounding trees, camels' entrails, blood, bones, and flesh littering the ground, a newly made grave and a big patch of blood where the unfortunate man had been killed. The Somalis had cut up what remained of the camels, and had eaten or taken away most of the meat, but I got some pieces and placed them just outside the Zariba, which was completed shortly after 6.15 p.m. by my two men, assisted by a few Somalis who had remained to cut up the camels.

As soon as the Zariba was ready I went

in and took up my position, accompanied by Gulaid Liban and one of the men belonging to the Karia. Every one else now decamped as speedily as possible, going off to their new Karia, about an hour and a half distant. They were, of course, much afraid of being out after dark, and one could not blame them. We were comfortably settled about 6.30; and now began the most interesting night I have ever spent in my life, as we were destined to have four lions round the Zariba from about 8.30 till 11.30 p.m., and then again from about 1 to 1.30 a.m.

There was about a quarter moon, which set shortly before midnight and gave a certain amount of light, but the thick scrub jungle which surrounded us and the tree under which my Zariba was built threw pretty heavy shadows all round. I had with me a 12-bore Paradox, shooting 4 drachms—just the weapon for night-work—and a ·275 sporting Mauser. The latter was hardly the rifle for lion-shooting, but I had brought it for the dibtag, and my ·577 had gone on with my

camels. This, however, did not trouble me, as the Paradox was all I wanted for the night's work.

The sun had set soon after six, and it now became pretty dark, save for the uncertain moonlight. The wind, too, had dropped entirely, and soon perfect silence fell on the jungle. This quiet was broken once about seven by the footsteps of some animal coming from the northward. It was only a hyæna, however, and it soon departed, leaving everything as still as before. The peep-hole of the Zariba faced due south—the direction from which we expected the lions to come—and I had a good view of an open space about 70 yards across which stretched just in front of me. Beyond this open space came thin scrub jungle which gradually thickened for about half a mile or so, when it merged into thick, heavy scrub. It was towards this place the lions' tracks led; consequently we expected them to come from this direction.

About 8.30 or so (a little before, I think) the lions put in a first appearance, coming, as

we expected, from the southward. One big male looked simply enormous in the moonlight, appearing to stand almost as high as a pony, and had I not got him next day I would certainly have considered I had seen a lion considerably larger than any I had come across in my previous trip—even after making allowances for the deceptive light. As it turned out he measured 8 feet 10½ inches as against 9 feet 2 inches of my best lion shot in 1895. He disappeared without giving me a chance, being about 60 or 70 yards distant —too far to risk a shot in the faint moonlight. Soon after he came back again, a little nearer this time, but end on towards me. I was ready to fire the moment he turned broadside on, but he again disappeared without giving me a chance, and I began to fear he had got my wind, especially as no lions came in front of the peep-hole for some time. From now till about 11.30 they kept close to and all round the Zariba; we could distinctly hear them grunting and snuffling at intervals and apparently finishing off all the odds and

ends of camel-meat and offal round about; none, however, would come in front of my peep-hole. I was in hopes all this time of getting a decent chance, but though I saw the lions more than once they were much too far off for a shot in the fast-waning moonlight. At last, between 11 and 11.30, they went off unfired at, and we all felt fairly sure they would not come back till after the moon had set and it was pretty dark. The moon went down shortly before midnight, and nothing happened for about an hour.

About 1 a.m. two, or possibly three lions came back, and one made a rush at the bait. I had, of course, to be very careful in my movements, so as not to make any noise, so I could not actually catch him at the meat, but by looking to the right I caught a glimpse of what I was uncertain as to being the lion or a bush. To show how uncertain night-shooting is, I may say I was on the point of firing at this object, which turned out to be a bush, but luckily for me the lion moved in time and I could just make out his outline, broadside



[*Photo. by Author.*

Lion shot April 25, 1901.

[*To face page* 48.



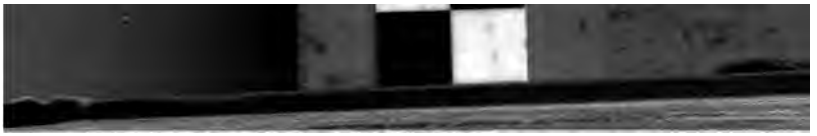


on at about 20 yards. I fired the Paradox at once, and with a loud half grunt, half roar, the lions disappeared in the darkness and we saw no more of them during the night, though one of us, and sometimes two, remained awake the whole time till daylight. We heard a lion moaning several times, and this, combined with the fact that he had spoken to the shot, made me think I had hit him.

Next morning, April 25th, as soon as it was light enough to see properly, we went outside and took up the tracks. We found blood, but very little, within 200 yards of the Zariba, and a short distance further on we saw some animals moving off through the scrub, but could not get a proper view of them. Just then Abdi Athi (the name of my man I had sent forward on horseback the previous evening to make the Zariba) turned up from the Karia, where he had spent the night, bringing with him his pony and five or six men, including the horseman who had brought me the news the previous afternoon. This man also brought his pony, so I now had two horsemen, but only

two, to follow up four lions, one of them wounded. My ·577 was with my camels about five miles off, and I must confess I did not altogether like following up the wounded lion with only the Paradox to depend on in case of a charge, as of course the Mauser was quite useless for such work. Added to this I had four or five men on foot who would, I well knew, be always more or less scattered, looking for tracks, it being almost impossible to keep natives of any sort together under these circumstances, no matter how much you may try to impress their danger on them. However, there was no help for it, all the Somalis being only too eager to go on. I sent one man to bring up my camels at once, and then off we started.

There was very little blood on the tracks, but they were not hard to follow after we once got fairly started and had carried them clear of the neighbourhood of the Zariba, where they were somewhat mixed up with those made by the lions when prowling round during the last two nights. In somewhat under three-quarters



of an hour we came upon the wounded lion. Luckily for us he was lying on his side under a thick bush, nearly dead and quite unable to get on to his legs. As he still breathed, I put a bullet through his shoulders from the Paradox: even this did not quite kill him, and I had to finish him off with another, from the Mauser, through the brain. He measured 8 feet 4 inches as he lay, and had hardly any mane. The shot fired at night, a hollow-pointed Paradox bullet, had hit him far back, but not quite far back enough for a proper kidney shot, or he would never have gone so far. One of his kidneys was pierced as it was, and the bullet had gone through and through him, making a big hole both on entry and exit. There was a lot of dried blood on his skin, but very little seemed to have fallen on his tracks, which accounted for our having found so little when following him up. I photographed him at once; then we skinned him, and took the skin straight back to the Zariba, which was only about ten minutes distant in a direct line; so it was, in all probability, this lion we had

heard moaning the previous night after my shot.

By the time the skin was properly cleaned my camels turned up and I had something to eat—the first food for nearly twenty-four hours, my dinner the previous night having consisted of a water-bottle full of half-tepid water, which I had shared with the two Somalis who had spent the night in the Zariba with me. After breakfast some twenty men came in from the Karia to pay their respects, to see the lion's skin, and to beg me to speak for them to the Commandant of the Levy, saying they had always been friends to the Government, and had never helped the Mullah, but had heard that some of their neighbours had been spreading false reports about them. I assured them it would be all right. Now when this interview was over these people, instead of going straight back to their Karia, hung about my camp till I started after the remaining lions. They then followed, keeping at first some distance behind to see the fun; and it was owing to this fact that the subsequent



accident happened, as it was one of these men who got mauled, and not one of those who had accompanied me from the first.

About 11.45 I eventually got started, having with me the same men who had accompanied me in the morning. I also had my ·577 by now, and felt quite prepared to meet anything that might turn up, my chief difficulty being that I had only two horsemen—a very small number to try and turn three lions in thick jungle. We took up the tracks from where we had killed the wounded one, and after following the spoor for about half an hour put up two lions—some of the men said three—in some very thick scrub. I got a snap-shot at one, which I ought really not to have taken, as I only saw him for an instant, and had I wounded him, which luckily I did not, it would have been a very awkward place in which to tackle a wounded lion. What was my horror, however, to see Gulaid Liban, who was carrying my Paradox, deliberately put it to his shoulder and try to get a shot at the lion as he disappeared! Luckily the weapon was on half-cock,

otherwise I think I should have half killed Gulaid. Never in all my previous experience of native Shikaries did I ever see one act like this. However, I was destined to see more of this man's behaviour in a very short time.

Away went the lions, closely followed by the two horsemen; the trackers also set off at a run, while I followed more leisurely, well knowing I could not keep up with the horsemen, and that I would only get blown if I ran in that heat, and consequently would not be in a fit state to shoot, if I got a chance. In about half an hour we heard shouts some way off, and eventually came up to where one lion was lying at bay under a small bush. The two horsemen had gone on after another, leaving some twenty men, all dismounted, watching this one from about 80 yards off. When I started I had only about five footmen with me, while there were now about twenty watching this lion. These men, I found out, were those who had come to see me that morning, and had afterwards followed us surreptitiously, saying they were going back to their Karia.

I was now about 180 yards from the lion, but, about 80 yards from me, and in a direct line between us, grew a small tree, and I at once saw that if I could reach it I would get a very fair shot. I was trying to work up to this point, and had gone about 30 yards or so, when suddenly the lion got up and went straight for the people watching him. I was now about 150 yards from the lion, and as he was only about 80 yards from the men he was charging, in a few seconds he was in a direct line between me and them, thus effectually precluding me from using my rifle. Even if I had fired in the few seconds it was safe to do so, the chances of stopping him at that distance were very small; and, had I only wounded him, there is no saying what he might not have done when he got amongst his enemies. Gulaid Liban now proceeded to play the fool for the second time that day. On seeing the lion begin his charge he at once started off at a run straight for the same point *without waiting for me or looking to see what I was going to do*, carrying my Paradox with him,

and thus effectually precluding any chance I might have had of a shot. Seeing this, I at once followed at a run—about 20 yards behind him—in the hope of being able to help the unfortunate people when the lion got amongst them. They all had spears, and had they only stood firm I believe they would have turned him; instead of this they wavered and opened out—about the worst thing they could have done. In a moment the lion was amongst them, and they began prodding at him with their spears and giving back rapidly. Even then he only bit one man on the thigh (and that not severely), and then left him and galloped off to the right as hard as he could go. He could have done an immense amount of damage had he chosen, and his rapid flight confirmed me in my belief that his charge was only a ruse to intimidate his enemies, and that he would have turned off short, and not charged home, had they only shown a bold front.

For the *third* time to-day Gulaid now exasperated me nearly to madness. When the lion turned off to the right, after leaving the

footmen, he gave me a beautiful chance—broadside on at about 70 or 80 yards. This wretched *soi-disant* Shikari, seeing this, turned off to the right too, thus bringing himself again in a direct line between me and the lion, which of course made it quite impossible for me to shoot. In vain I shouted at him—on he went—having apparently entirely lost his head. At length he stopped, but by this time the lion was about 130 yards distant, and nearly entering a bit of tree jungle where it would have been impossible to have got a shot; once he entered the scrub I would never have seen him again. I immediately knelt down and fired with my ·577, taking him just in front of the shoulder. On receiving the shot he pulled up at once, nearly falling as he did so, and the left barrel knocked him clean over. He managed by a few spasmodic efforts to crawl under a small tree about 2 or 3 yards off and to get his head round facing me. I put in another shot for safety's sake when I got to about 80 yards from him, but he did not really require it—either of the first two would have killed him.

This lion was the biggest of the three I got that day, 8 feet 10½ inches as he lay—a big, powerfully made beast, but with no mane.

I immediately made inquiries about the wounded man, and had him carried under a tree. Finding he was not really badly hurt, and having no remedies with me, even in my camp, I had him taken to his Karia, where I caused some permanganate of potash to be sent to him, together with instructions as to dressing and cleaning the wound. When passing near this place about a fortnight later I heard he was practically all right again, and was going about, the wounds being nearly healed.

After this we went on after the other lion, which the horsemen had succeeded in rounding up. We found them about half a mile further on, riding backward and forward round a patch of long grass in which they said he had taken refuge, and from which he absolutely refused to move, despite all we could do. We therefore had to burn the patch. After some difficulty we got it fairly alight, and when it

was about two-thirds burnt, out he came. He stood at the edge of the fire about 80 yards from me, broadside on, and I at once gave him the ·577 in the left shoulder. On receiving the shot he turned round and charged straight back through the fire (which was about 18 or 20 yards broad), burning his whiskers and singeing himself generally, but not very badly. On getting through the flames he stood on his hind legs, pawing the air, and then fell over on his side—dead. The men all set up a tremendous cheer, and there were the usual hand-shaking and congratulations. Thus ended a most successful day, marred only by Gulaid Liban's conduct on three occasions. This last lion was killed at 2.30 p.m.—just over twenty-four hours since I heard about the Karia having been attacked by the four—and by the time we had skinned both and got back to camp it was 5.30 p.m. The fourth—a lioness —we never saw, and I was just as pleased she got away, as three lions in one day ought to satisfy any one, and I was especially delighted at their being all males. If sportsmen would

only curb their passion for making a *bag* (as has happened in Somaliland) and would spare the females, after getting a certain number, lions should continue fairly plentiful in this country for many a day to come. The killing of even a large number of males of any species of animal will never do one-tenth part of the damage that the indiscriminate slaughter of both sexes will infallibly cause in a very short time. These lions were all measured *as they fell*, before being skinned, by passing a tape from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail along the curves of the body, after having pulled the dead animal as straight as possible. No reliance can be placed on measurements taken from skins alone, as, after being taken off, skins will stretch to almost any extent. This fact will account for the existence of 11 and 12-foot tigers!

As I had seen no signs of dibtag, the next morning, April 26th, I shifted camp, making for my original destination. On the way I saw some oryx, but I would not fire at them, having got as many specimens as I wanted



during my previous trip. Some distance further on I came on some geranook, one of which had a very good head, but I could not get near him. A short way on I sighted a dibtag with a nice head, and after some stalking I managed to get a shot and missed him in a very stupid and annoying manner. He was standing near the edge of a thick patch of bushes about 180 yards distant and was evidently alarmed, but could not make me out. Putting up the 200 yards sight I fired, but took the head of the foresight a trifle too full, and put the bullet just over his back. He bolted at once, but stood again amongst the bushes, only his head and neck being covered, the rest of his body affording a clear shot. He was just about the same distance as before, and as I knew exactly how much of the foresight I had taken in at the first shot, I felt pretty sure of him as I brought the Mauser up for the second time. Some way or another I pressed too heavily on the trigger, probably through having been shooting with a Government rifle and its heavy pull-off, the result

being that my rifle went off before I got the sights fairly on the dibtag, and the bullet went just underneath him. Away he went, leaving me very much disgusted with myself—especially as I had not yet got a specimen of the dibtag, and this one, which had moreover a fair if not a good head, had most considerately given me a second chance. Of course I never saw him again, nor did I see any more that morning.

I arrived in camp about 11 a.m., and that evening and the next morning I went after dibtag again. There were a fair number, but very wild, and I only saw one really good head, but could not get within 300 yards of him. The ground here was covered with small bushes, which, however, did not seem to help one much in stalking, but only served to increase the difficulty of shooting, quite preventing me from getting a lying-down shot. I got three or four long shots at about 250 yards and only two at under 200 yards. With one of the latter I killed a dibtag, whilst with the other I regret to say I wounded and

lost another. On the afternoon of the 27th I struck camp and moved back to Eyl Humo, arriving there about 9 p.m.

As a fitting climax to his three performances on the 25th, Gulaid Liban had the sublime impertinence to ask for "bakshish" on account of the luck I had had with the lions! Had he only kept quiet, as he should have done from pure shame, I might have kept him on as a Syce, as he had really done his best when I was after the dibtag, but this request was the proverbial "last straw," and I sent him about his business after having told him, in pretty plain and forcible language, what I thought of him. I was very glad to see the last of him, as he was one of the most avaricious men I have ever seen, even for a Somali, which is saying a good deal. It was very lucky I got rid of him, as a few days afterwards my old Shikari, Ali Borali, who had been with me all through my 1895 expedition, came to see me, and I engaged him at once, he apparently being as glad to come to me as I was to get him.

CHAPTER V

Arrival of Indian contingent under Major Beynon—Medical Staff also arrives—Shortness of medical officers and hospital assistants—Arrangements for dividing force into two columns—Strength of each column—Appointed to command second column—The Somali and his love of looting camels—Re-engage my old Shikari, Ali Borali—Somali stung by a scorpion—Nearly dies—Cure—Final preparations at Burao—Field-firing—Start from Burao—Garrison left behind—Itinerary of march from Burao to Sanala—Capture of camels—First column formed into a flying column—Second column left at Sanala.

ON my return to Eyl Humo on the 27th of April I found that Major Beynon had arrived, bringing with him some 25 or 30 of the Indian contingent, who had at length landed. The rest he had left at Burao, to which place he had first gone. These men, being Regulars, were of great use on parade, and if they had only come before there would have been a vast difference in the drill of the

Levy. As it was, they only arrived about one month before the final advance from Burao, the delay having apparently been caused by correspondence between the English and Indian Governments.

Our Medical contingent also arrived at this time, but there were only *one* British medical officer and three Indian hospital assistants for a force of 20 British officers and about 2,000 Somalis, including spearmen, &c.—a totally inadequate provision, as we had to leave a force to hold Burao as our advanced base when we went forward into the Haud. This force, consisting of three British officers and about 200 Somalis had for some time *no medical attendant of any kind*, as the doctor and all his assistants had of course to go forward. Again—when I was left in command of the second column at Sanala, on the 1st of June, I had with me three British officers and about 500 Somalis in all. With this force there could be left only one Indian hospital assistant (a native). We had hard fighting on the 2nd and 3rd of June, and this one

man had his hands more than full with the wounded. He had nobody to assist him, and when it came to amputating both legs of one of the Levy who had been wounded on the 3rd of June, the chloroform had to be administered by a British *combatant*—not medical—officer, while another rendered the assistant what help he could. The patient died within half an hour after the first leg had been cut off. I do not, however, think that in this case he could have been saved, as, like many natives, he was extremely averse to amputation; in fact, he refused point-blank at first, and by the time he consented mortification had set in. Had a British doctor been present and insisted on taking off both limbs at the very first, the man's life would, in all probability, have been saved.

The foregoing will, I think, serve to show what the medical arrangements were like. Luckily there were no other serious cases on the 2nd and 3rd of June, nor were any of the British officers hit. Had it been otherwise, and the wounds severe, I do not like to think

what the consequences might have been. Dr. Boulton came to us from the first column as soon as they came near our camp, but he did not arrive until June 16th.

As a matter of fact, the third Indian hospital assistant never accompanied the force beyond Burao, nor was he ever intended for our Levy, as he was sent to accompany Major Hanbury Tracy and Captain Cobbold, who were with the Abyssinian forces. As they had already started some time before this hospital assistant arrived, it was found impossible to send him up to join them through a disturbed country to an unknown place, as it was, of course, uncertain where the Abyssinian army would be on any particular day. He was therefore sent to our force, and remained with the Burao garrison, where he arrived some time after the main body had left. Thus, during the time active operations were in progress against the Mullah, we had only one European doctor and two Indian hospital assistants; and there were no stretchers or "Dhoolies" of any sort.

But to return to Eyl Humo.

We remained there till the 12th of May, and during this time the final arrangements were made for the distribution of our forces after leaving Burao. It was perfectly evident that the large number of transport animals that we were obliged to take with us would render any very rapid movement of the whole force almost, if not quite, impossible, while at the same time we would be so far separated from our advanced base at Burao, that caravans could only be sent to us under a strong escort, when the intervening country was clear of marauding parties of the Mullah's people, and when the Commanding Officer could state definitely to what place the convoy was to be sent.

It was therefore decided to form two columns —one under Colonel Swayne, comprising the bulk of the mounted troops and about two-thirds of the Infantry, accompanied only by such transport as was compatible with rapid marching. The second column, composed of a few horsemen for scouting purposes, about one-third of the Infantry and 22 Indian



Photo. by Lieut. Salmon.

Starting on the march—Colonel Swayne and his Adjutant the late Captain Friederichs.

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Regulars, was placed under my command. With this column came the remainder of the first column transport—comprising all spare rations, all the reserve ammunition of the whole force, and our own transport—the latter the same, in proportion, as that of the first column. By this means, and by cutting down all the impedimenta of both columns as far as possible, it was expected that the second column would never be more than two days at most behind the first. As a matter of fact the second column never dropped a single march behind the other, the whole way from Burao to Sanala—seven days—and this in spite of several long marches and having the worst camels.

I was not best pleased at having to go with this column, since I expected, as did every one else, that whatever fighting there might be would be of a running nature, and that the Mullah would never make a stand. However, there was no help for it, and there was always the chance that the enemy might avoid the first and attack the second column,



hearing that the latter had not so many fighting men with it, and that it was hampered with a large number of camels and much baggage. And this, in a way, was exactly what did happen at Sanala; where, in addition to stores, we had under our charge over 3,000 looted camels, which invariably appear to exercise much the same sort of effect on a Somali that a collection of diamonds has on a burglar. No matter whose camels they are, provided they are not his own, he *must* try and capture them. You might as well attempt to stop a Jew from making a bargain or a politician from talking, as endeavour to eliminate this camel-looting propensity in a Somali. It is a national trait in his character, and the same man whom you might implicitly trust with a bag of rupees will most probably never hesitate for an instant in robbing you of one of your own camels—should he get the chance.

There was not much sport at Eyl Humo. Some thick jungle surrounded the camp, and we could generally pick up an odd dik dik and guinea-fowl; there were also a few

spur-fowl, and an occasional partridge. These formed a welcome addition to our fare, which consisted of tinned stores with a little fresh mutton.

After a three weeks' halt we left Eyl Humo on the 12th of May about midday, and reached Lebebos, on the Arori plain, the same night. The next day we halted, and a pleasant surprise awaited me. About noon there came to my tent Ali Borali, my old Shikari, who had accompanied me on my previous expedition. He had been with a shooting party up the Nile, beyond Khartoum, when I landed in Somaliland, but had heard of my arrival when he got to Berbera on his return, and had come straight to see me. I at once offered to re-engage him, to which he readily consented, and I now knew that I had not only a most excellent Shikari in every way, but a man in whom I could place every reliance when in a dangerous position. Amongst other instances of his pluck I may mention that he twice stood by me when charged by a wounded lion—once

with a spear in his hand, whilst on the other occasion he had only an empty rifle. This time the wounded beast got within 18 yards of us before I could fire, and when I did, it was some moments before we could see if the lion was down or not, so much did the smoke hang. Yet Ali Borali calmly stood by my side as if I were shooting rabbits, and though my back was actually against a tree when I fired, he never attempted to climb the branches or moved. It turned out a very lucky thing for me that I secured his services, for later on I managed to get a good deal of shooting one way and another, in which he proved invaluable. During the two fights we had at Sanala, Ali never left my side for a moment.

We left Lebebos on the evening of the 14th about 5 p.m., and made a night march into Burao, twenty-four miles, arriving there in the small hours of the 15th. About midnight I was told that one of the Havildars (Sergeants) had been bitten by a snake, and that the man was dying. On getting to

the spot I found him lying on the ground, apparently a corpse. He was already getting cold, his pulse hardly perceptible, and his heart very weak. They said he had been bitten on the foot, but I could find no sign anywhere of a snake's fangs. Had I done so I would have cut well into the flesh with a knife, applied some gunpowder from a cartridge in my pocket and set it alight, as I had read in some book of this being a rough-and-ready treatment. At any rate it would most probably have brought him to his senses, judging by after events, but fortunately for him I could find no spot on which to try my 'prentice hand at operating. It was also pitch dark, so that the only light I could get was by striking matches. I had expended a box in this fruitless task when Colonel Swayne arrived on the scene. On hearing what was the matter, and that I could find no signs of a puncture, he said that he thought it was most probably due to the sting of a scorpion, adding that a Syce of his had once been bitten by an absolutely non-poisonous snake,

and had died of pure fright. By his direction some of the Havildar's companions now set on him, thumped and whacked and pinched him lustily, rolled him over and over, and generally gave him what would have been a very uncomfortable time, had he been conscious. After about ten minutes we raised him up, still an inert and lifeless mass, and began to walk him about. In a short time he commenced to show some slight signs of returning consciousness, and in about half an hour he was decidedly better. We then started him off on his way to Burao between two men, who were relieved by others when tired, and between them they walked, dragged, and beat him along to Burao, giving him no rest. The next day, beyond being a little weak and possibly somewhat sore, owing to the well-meant and necessary but somewhat rough handling he had undergone, he appeared to be none the worse. In all probability it was a scorpion that stung him. A very painful experience is a scorpion's sting, and the part attacked soon swells up.

On feeling the pain and not seeing what had bitten him, owing to the darkness, he had most likely taken it for granted that it was a snake—a reptile of which all Somalis stand in the greatest dread. It was then a case of Allah's will that he *must* die, so he made up his mind and tried to help his fate by going off as soon as possible. Had it not been for Colonel Swayne this man would in all probability have died; but this incident shows what can be done. Of course, had it really been a poisonous snake—for instance, a puff-adder—nothing could have saved the man. For my own part I certainly thought he was beyond hope, when I found his body so cold.

We arrived at Burao on the 15th and left on the 22nd of May. During this week we were fully occupied sorting out and arranging the stores for the two columns, separating what was to be left behind, getting in a few final days at drill and musketry, and doing our field-firing. For this last we had not, of course, the elaborate appliances to be found at home

or in India; but, all the same, it was a very fair test of the men's steadiness. We advanced from about 800 yards down the stony dry bed of the Burao River, the two companies on the left having to cross ground much cut up by wells. The targets were against a high bank where the river bends to the left. I was quite surprised at the steadiness with which it was all carried out, especially considering the very short time the men had been enlisted. There was, however, nothing to distract their attention, and they regarded it merely as a parade. Had it been otherwise they would have simply lost their heads with excitement, to say the least of it. Of this I was soon to be forcibly convinced on more than one occasion. The actual shooting was on the whole good, nor was any one killed or even wounded, at least as far as I ever heard. I must confess I was not sorry when it was all over.

On May 22nd we finally started on our advance into the Mullah's country, leaving about 200 men under Lieutenants Taylor, Walshe, and Salmon to hold Burao. All

superfluous kit and stores were left behind, the baggage being cut down to the utmost. No tents were taken at all. Each officer took a green Willesden canvas waterproof sheet, and the men also carried a certain number of these per company.

The first day we marched from Burao to Bair, about sixteen miles, and halted there on the 23rd and 24th, while waiting for some important information. The heat at Bair was very great—quite the hottest time we had during the expedition.

On the 25th we made an evening march from Bair to Liberari, arriving there about 10 p.m.

On the 26th we marched from Liberari to Kuljemo, making Odaweina our midday halt.

On the 27th Kuljemo to Olassan, midday halt at Little Bohotlé.

On the 28th Olassan to Eyl Dab, midday at Ainaba. During this day's march we passed a deserted stockaded village of the Mullah's, called Kob-fardod. This was burned.

On the 29th we halted during the morning

at Eyl Dab, and in the evening marched to Oak.

On the 30th we started at 2 a.m. from Oak, and halted about 11 a.m. at a deep nullah, well filled with water, and surrounded by good grazing. In the afternoon we went to Sanala, about six miles further on.

On the 31st we all halted at Sanala.

On the evening of the 29th Major Beynon, with the Mounted Infantry and the Camel Corps, had gone off in a north-easterly direction to surprise some Karias of the Jama Siad tribe, who were powerful supporters of the Mullah. Marching all that night, they completely surprised these Karias at dawn on the 30th, capturing about 3,500 camels and a fair number of cattle, together with a vast quantity of sheep. These latter they had to leave behind, as it would have been quite impossible to bring away such a large amount of live stock, and to guard it *en route*: besides which the sheep could never have kept up with the camels. The whole of the rest, however, they brought with them, guarding them successfully

during that day's march and during the next night, finally driving them triumphantly into our camp at Sanala on the 31st about midday, having covered over one hundred miles in thirty-six hours. They also brought in two important prisoners.

Colonel Swayne had now received definite information that the Mullah was encamped near Yahél, about two days to the southward. He at once made up his mind to attack him there, but this last addition to our already large number of camels rendered any rapid movement of the whole force quite out of the question, while it was equally impossible for the second column to guard another 3,500 camels in addition to those they already had to look after. It was therefore decided to form the first into practically a flying column, taking only ten days' rations and still further cutting down their transport. Everything left behind, including the newly-captured camels, was handed over to me with orders to form a strong Zariba in a favourable spot a short distance from where we were then encamped.

CHAPTER VI

Move into new Zariba at Sanala—Description of position—Force available for its defence—Departure of first column—Our chances of being attacked—The Mullah's move on hearing of the Jama Siads being looted—False alarms—Attack on Zariba on afternoon of June 2nd—Its repulse—The strength of enemy—Attacked again on morning of June 3rd—Sharp fighting in lower Zariba—Enemy finally repulsed—Pursued by Colonel Swayne's column—Confusion in names of place where fighting took place—Probable results had the enemy succeeded in defeating us.

ON the evening of May 31st the second column moved into their new Zariba, which, with the assistance of the first column, had been made sufficiently strong to contain the camels for that night, though it subsequently took us about a day and a half to complete it.

The position chosen was a very strong one, being situated on a gentle slope which de-



scended from a big stone cairn on the east to a pool of water about 150 yards long and 100 yards broad on the west. The distance from the top of the cairn to the near or eastern edge of the water was about 200 yards. In this space two Zaribas were made. The upper and smaller Zariba included the stone cairn in its eastern corner, and was entirely for the accommodation of the men; it held a complete command of view and fire over the lower Zariba, which contained all the camels, horses, &c. This lower Zariba ran down to the water's edge, and a thick thorn hedge divided the two.

The ·450-bore Maxim was placed on the top of the cairn, on a mud platform with a stone rampart round about; from this position it commanded a very extensive field of fire on all sides, and could also shoot over the heads of any men or animals in either of the two Zaribas. Round about the Maxim, and covered by the low stone rampart, I posted the 22 men of the Indian contingent, as being the best shots; and it is a remarkable fact that, in spite of the exposed position of this place, not a

man on it was hit on either of the two days we were attacked. Behind the cairn the ground fell away steeply to the east, and as this cairn also formed an excellent look-out place, we always had a sentry there.

An entanglement of barbed wire, about 30 yards broad, was run all round the upper Zariba, and round the western or water edge of the lower Zariba, being made specially strong at the corners. A strand of barbed wire was also run *through* the bushes comprising the northern and southern faces of the lower or camel Zariba, partly to prevent the camels from breaking it down, and partly to stop any one attempting to force his way through. Had a wire entanglement on the ground been run entirely round this lower Zariba, it would have been impossible to have driven in about 3,500 camels—at any rate in a hurry—without entangling them, even if open spaces had been left.

On the southern side of the position stretched a long range of low hills about a mile distant; between the Zaribas and these



hills the ground was perfectly flat. On the other three sides was an open plain, over which the upper Zariba commanded a splendid field of view and fire. There were a few small bushes on this plain, especially on the south side towards the hills, but for 150 yards all round the position the ground was quite clear.

On the western side, beyond the water, the ground was more or less broken up by small hillocks and nullahs, interspersed with bushes, all of which afforded cover nearly up to the further edge of the water, and it is to this that I attribute the fact of the enemy getting so much closer to the Zariba at its western end than anywhere else. This, however, was the only fault in what was an excellent position, and one impossible to improve upon for the work in hand.

On several occasions afterwards, when riding round this place, I was surprised to notice how little of the whole camp could be seen till close up, especially from the southern and south-western sides. We were also very fortunate in having such a plentiful supply of good water near at hand.

To hold this place there were three British officers besides myself, and a force of about 500 Somalis all told, only about 370 of whom had rifles, the remainder being armed with spears and shields. The first column had left a few men behind, but of course they were their "wasters" who could not march, and some of them were sick. In addition to our own stores and those left behind by the other column, we had the reserve ammunition and food of the whole force, also about 3,500 camels in all, about 50 horses, a few sheep and cattle, and 53 prisoners to guard.

We were busy the whole of the 1st of June strengthening the Zariba and putting things straight. Most of the officers of the other column came over to say goodbye before they started, which they did about 3 p.m. that day, marching off in a south-easterly direction. They all seemed to think we had a very good chance of being attacked, as we had so much loot with us: "Sitting over a bait," as some one aptly put it. I admitted the chance, but must confess that I did not think it a great one, never expecting more than, at



the most, an attack by a fairly strong raiding party of the Jama Said, whose camels we had taken. On the other hand, I did not think that the first column would have anything more than a running fight with the enemy; and I considered that they would probably have a ten days' or a fortnight's chase, which would, however, probably have the effect of driving the Mullah out of our territory with a large loss of camels and sheep, and probably a few prisoners. Colonel Swayne at starting reminded me of what he had said several times from the first, namely, that he did not think we would have any fighting till we had made a good haul of loot, but that then the enemy would be pretty sure to make a determined attempt to get it back again. His prediction proved perfectly correct, and, had I known the Somali character as well then as I do in some ways now, I would have considered my chance of a fight a great deal better than I then thought it was.

From information that we afterwards received, what really appears to have happened was this:—

In Pursuit of

After their surprise by the mounted troops under Major Beynon on the morning of the 30th of May, the Jama Siad, instead of attacking our men on their way back with the captured live stock, seem to have sent mounted men straight to the Mullah's camp and told him about the raid, and where the looted camels had been taken. Mahomed Abdullah then moved north-west with all his available men, and, having ascertained about the splitting of our forces into two columns, decided on attacking the one which had been left at Sanala, having heard that it was the weaker of the two and that the camels were in its charge. So far his information seems to have been perfectly correct, but he was also informed that the whole force left at Sanala consisted of only 100 riflemen, all, or nearly all, of whom were sick. His idea thus was to attack and wipe out the second column, and then, having captured a large supply of rifles and ammunition, to follow up and fall upon the first column with a following much better armed by reason of the rifles he hoped to capture, and



also greatly augmented in numbers from the prestige which he undoubtedly would have gained had he succeeded in carrying out his project. As it turned out this plan of his ended in his defeat at Sanala, and his narrow escape from capture at the hands of Colonel Swayne, who, by marching south-east on the 1st and 2nd of June, got between the Mullah and his headquarters, and intercepted him in his retreat from Sanala to Yahél.

The foregoing paragraph is, no doubt, somewhat of a digression, and should perhaps have appeared at the end of the chapter, but interposing it here will serve to explain how it was we were attacked so soon after the departure of the first column. The facts mentioned in it will also serve as a fitting commentary on the ideas expressed by more than one officer as to our liability to attack when "sitting over a bait"; and they also serve to show how true was Colonel Swayne's prediction that our first fight would almost certainly be an attempt on the part of the enemy to retake captured camels, sheep, or cattle.

By the evening of the 1st of June, when the first column started, we had greatly strengthened both Zaribas, and had got our wire entanglements out. The thorn hedge of the upper Zariba was kept low enough to enable the men to fire over it with ease, but it was made quite 5 yards thick. A breastwork of water-tanks was built inside, and a similar breastwork was run along the upper side of the hedge dividing the upper and lower Zaribas. This was done in order to give the defenders of the upper, or men's, Zariba, as much cover and as strong a line of defence as possible, in case the enemy should succeed in entering the camel Zariba, and thus be enabled to attack us from the lower or western side.

Before the departure of the other column we had more than one false alarm, when every one stood to their arms. The cause of these scares was invariably the same, namely, some of the tribal horsemen who had gone out a short distance from the Zariba—probably only to graze their horses—returning at full gallop. If ever there is any one present before whom



[*Photo. by Lieut. Salmon.*

Camels entering zariba at Burao.

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he can show off, the average Somali's idea of horsemanship seems to consist solely in going at full gallop, arms, legs, and whip flying around like the sails of a windmill, flogging for all he is worth, and then suddenly pulling up in about three or four lengths with his powerful bit; I suppose they think it shows what fine horsemen they are, especially as they will do this all day long if they think there is any one to see them. As nearly all the tribal horsemen who had accompanied the force so far were with the first column, whose camp was only about three-quarters of a mile from ours, and in full view, these false alarms were of constant occurrence till the other force had actually started.

On the morning of the 2nd of June we let out the camels to graze close round the Zariba, and I sent three or four horsemen with them to assist in rounding them in quickly should occasion arise. Of course we had a couple of scares during the morning, caused as usual by these horsemen, one or two of whom came back at full gallop at intervals merely to say

that the camels were all right, or that the grazing was good. There was still a good deal of work to be done, strengthening the Zariba and getting things tidy inside, but everything was pretty well finished by 2 p.m.

I had a picket out on the hills to the south, and another on a hillock about a mile and a half to the north. During the forenoon the former sent in to say they had seen some men among the hills to the south-east, but a long way off. This picket was strengthened, and told to keep a good look-out.

About a quarter to four in the afternoon there was a general stir in camp, and the pickets came in. In a few minutes we saw a small body of horsemen in very good order appear among the hills to the south-east. They were soon joined by fresh arrivals, till there must have been about 500 in all. They were now descending into the plain, and going along the base of the hills to the west, towards where our camels were grazing, with the evident intention of cutting them off. The camels had been brought in very rapidly



towards the Zariba, but were still some way out, so I now opened fire with the Maxim gun (which was worked throughout by Somalis under the direct command of Lieutenant Younghusband, of the Bedfordshire Regiment), and with some long-range fire from the Indian Regulars. Although the distance was about 1,200 yards, we soon had the satisfaction of seeing some empty saddles. This kept the horsemen from coming in much closer, but they still continued their course westward, and when well beyond the water began to swing round towards the north with the object of getting our camels on that side before they were driven in. I sent Lieutenant Murray (East Surrey Regiment) out from the south face with two sections to protect the camels, while they were being brought into the Zariba from that direction. This he succeeded in doing, and all the animals on that side were soon in safety.

It was not quite so easy getting them in on the other side, where the larger portion of the camels were. They got crowded into the

entrance, through which they could not all go at once, and then, becoming frightened, some began to break back. One lot, a good fifty or sixty, got about a quarter of a mile out into the plain, and I began to fear we would lose them, as by this time some of the enemy's horsemen were getting right round, but a good way out. I then turned the fire of the Maxim and the Indians on to these horsemen, and at the same time sent out Jemadar Jama Said, of the Military Police, with a section to try and drive in this bunch of camels. He performed this work in capital style and brought them all in. Eventually we got safely into the Zariba every single camel except two, which broke away. These two, together with about twenty sheep, which could not keep up with the camels when being driven in, were all the loot the Mullah's people succeeded in capturing.

Meanwhile the enemy had kept pressing on from the south, the horsemen being supported by a large number of men on foot, mostly armed with spears and shields, while some fifty or sixty had rifles, with which they kept



up a somewhat irregular fire. They advanced in the most plucky fashion, but not a man got up to the Zariba, though some were shot close to it. By this time it was getting dark, and the attack now slackened and finally ceased for a time, but the enemy still kept up an intermittent fire, which, however, did no further damage. They did not go far away, all the same, but remained fairly close, though they had, so far, failed in both their objects, namely, to carry off the camels and to get inside the Zariba.

Just previous to this I had sent Lieutenant Lamprey (Royal Dublin Fusiliers) the transport officer of the column, with some transport men (armed with rifles) assisted by spearmen, to hold the lower edge of the camel Zariba, as I much feared the result if the enemy once got among the animals. It was well I did this, as a determined attempt was made soon after dark to rush the north-west corner of the lower Zariba. Some of the enemy, under cover of the darkness and assisted by the more favourable

nature of the ground near here (*i.e.*, the broken ground on the further side of the water), succeeded in getting right up to the Zariba, and several were shot down touching it—on the outside, however; not a single man got inside. Just about the same time another attack was made on the Maxim cairn, which was held by the seven Somalis who worked the gun, and by the twenty-two Indians. The wire entanglement by which the cairn was surrounded here proved of great service and considerably hampered the enemy during their attack. This, together with the fire that was poured into them at such close quarters, checked this rush also, about twelve dead bodies being found around this place the next morning. After this no further attack was made during the night, but a dropping fire was kept up by the enemy till about 10 p.m., after which time we were left in comparative peace, but the enemy could be heard moving about in the bush and calling to each other all night. They must have carried away a lot of dead

and wounded during the darkness, a good proof of this being that though we subsequently found about ten or twelve of their horses dead in various places round the Zariba, there were no saddles or bridles on any of them. Our total loss so far was four men killed, one man wounded, and two horses killed.

From our own observations on the spot, and from what prisoners afterwards told us, the total strength of the attacking force was about 2,500, comprising about 500 horse and 2,000 footmen.

The moon rose shortly after 9 p.m., but the light was never very good, as there were many clouds drifting across the sky. We passed an anxious night, but the day broke without any further attack having been made, and as soon as it was light enough to see I went to the top of the Maxim cairn and thoroughly examined the whole of the surrounding country with a powerful telescope. There was nothing to be seen except ten horsemen and two men on foot; these were all between two and three

miles distant, and were going straight away from us in a south-easterly direction across the hills. I then sent out a few small parties to examine the ground close round the Zariba, in case there should be any of the enemy hidden in the near vicinity. They found none, but reported having seen a number of dead bodies, and many traces of dead and wounded men having been carried off. There were twelve dead round the Maxim cairn; five others lay behind one bush close up to the camel Zariba on the south side, and there were several dead round the north-west corner which the enemy had tried to rush under cover of darkness. These I saw myself, also several men and horses lying further out: this showed that the enemy had suffered somewhat more severely than I had at first thought. Having heard them close round us all through the night until nearly dawn, especially in the direction of the hills, I did not consider it advisable to send men out any great distance in that direction, as I thought it very probable that



the Mullah's people were still in considerable force in the neighbourhood—a supposition that was soon to be verified.

About a quarter to nine a large and rapidly increasing number of men, all on foot, began to issue from the hills, rapidly extending to both flanks till they were in one long line, several ranks deep. At a distance of about a mile—or rather less—from our position their line extended from a point beyond and to the south-east of the Maxim cairn, to another point out from and beyond the broken ground to the west of the water at the bottom of the camel Zariba. On they came, straight for us, gradually opening out as they advanced, and enveloping the south and west sides of our position. Their number was about 5,000 in all, and they had about 80 or 100 men armed with rifles. I had given orders that our men were to reserve their fire till the enemy got to 500 yards from the Zariba, and, though very excited, they remained splendidly in hand, not a shot being fired until the Mullah's men came within that



distance. We then opened a heavy fire from Maxim and rifles, the result of which was that, though the enemy pressed on with the utmost gallantry time after time, not a man got within 150 yards of the upper Zariba; though they made several attempts, they did not seem to be able to face the last space of absolutely open ground that led up to our position. They, too, reserved their fire till they were within about 400 yards, when they shot considerably better than on the previous evening, as we had several casualties through their fire, but, luckily for us, most of their bullets went high.

Lieutenant Lamprey with some of the Transport Section and some spearmen again held the lower Zariba, and here, as on the previous day, he had to repel a determined attack. The extreme left of the attacking force, as I have already mentioned, reached right out beyond and to the west of the broken ground on the further side of the water. Having advanced a certain distance towards the north, the left of their line



wheeled to the right, and then advanced due east, at right angles to their former direction. This brought them, under cover of the broken ground, close up to the further edge of the water, whence they made a most determined rush on the north-west corner of the lower Zariba. A short but fierce fight then ensued, some of the enemy getting close enough to hurl spears (and in some cases even stones and wooden clubs) into the Zariba. There being no attack on the northern side of the upper Zariba, I sent two sections to Lamprey's assistance, as it was of the utmost importance to prevent the enemy from getting any footing amongst the camels. These two sections speedily cleared the corner, and the enemy fell back, leaving over thirty dead round this corner alone—fifteen bodies being taken out of the water shortly afterwards. The fighting here was very sharp while it lasted, several of the enemy being killed almost touching the Zariba; but not a man got inside. We lost two men killed and one wounded by spears

at this corner, but this was the only point seriously threatened—the fire from the upper Zariba being too hot for any one to get close up.

Had the enemy succeeded in forcing an entrance, even at one point of the camel Zariba, it would have been a serious matter, as they could then have collected under cover of the large number of camels there crowded together, and advanced to attack the lower edge of the men's Zariba, still keeping under shelter of the camels till quite close up. Even if they had failed in forcing an entrance into the upper Zariba they would, almost to a certainty, have succeeded in letting out most, if not all, of the camels from the lower one. As it was, this danger was averted.

After this onslaught failed the enemy broke and retreated to the hills, and the fighting was over, nor was the Zariba again attacked. I sent out the few tribal horsemen I had, about ten in number, supported by half a company of Infantry, to clear the ground in the immediate vicinity of our position ; but this was all I could

do. Had I only possessed a sufficient force of mounted men to pursue the enemy, I could have inflicted very severe loss on them, as they were thoroughly disorganised, and completely at our mercy. As it was, they fell in during their flight with Colonel Swayne's force, who followed them up, killing another 200 or so, and chasing the Mullah out of British into Italian territory, Mahomed Abdullah himself narrowly escaping capture.

As, however, I was of course not present at this pursuit, I have asked Lieutenant A. H. Dixon, of the West India Regiment, kindly to write a chapter, giving a history of what happened to the first column from the time they left us at Sanala on the 1st of June till the two columns joined hands at Lassador on the 18th.

As to the name of the place at which these two days' fighting took place, there has been a great deal of confusion. The first name I heard was Samali. This is most probably the right name, and it is that by which the Dolbahanta tribes, who inhabit the surrounding country, know it. They also sometimes call

it Aāfbukéli, but I have hardly ever heard this name used. Samali has got altered to Somala and Somali, and in the official despatches of the Expedition it is referred to as Sanala, by which name I have called it, though Samali or Sumali is, I think, the correct name. Our men also called it Harradig, which must not be confounded with Hanadigit, which lies much further to the west.

In nearly all the accounts that got into the English papers the place is called Gebile. This is entirely wrong, as Gebile lies about two days' march north-west of Hargeisa, over three hundred miles from where the fight took place. How the place got to be described as Gebile I cannot possibly understand.

Had the Mullah succeeded in his attack on the Zariba of the second column, there is not the slightest doubt that every single one of the defenders would have been killed without mercy; no quarter would have been given, nor was any expected by us in the event of the enemy's success. We all knew that it was a case of "neck or nothing." Two of our

men were killed outside the Zariba on the afternoon of the 2nd, and when we found their bodies next day they were literally cut to pieces with spear stabs. Many of the Somalis fighting on our side had had all their property carried off by the Mullah; in some cases their wives and children had been killed and mutilated in the most horrible manner, and most assuredly the same fate awaited any of my men who might have been captured. I recommend a consideration of these facts to those traitorous faddists who always try to see their own countrymen in the wrong, and who sit at home at ease and cry out against those who risk their lives where their critics care not to go.

Had Mahomed Abdullah carried out his plan of wiping out the second column, he would have captured about 370 rifles, and every single round of ammunition the whole Expedition possessed with the exception of about 200 rounds per man with the first column. In addition to this all the spare rations for the whole force would have fallen into his hands,

to say nothing of all our miscellaneous stores, both Government and private.

Thus strengthened, he would either have overwhelmed the first column, or else have forced it to abandon its object and leave the country. The Mullah's forces would then have overrun the whole of Somaliland, as no tribe or combination of tribes could possibly have opposed him, and he might even have descended on Berbera itself. The final result of a victory of his followers at Sanala would have been anarchy and bloodshed through the whole of Somaliland, British and Italian, and the only way of restoring order would have been to send a big and costly Expedition from home or from India.

CHAPTER VII

Our losses during the two days' fighting—Rifles found amongst enemy's dead—Enemy's loss—Bury the dead—Enemy's total loss estimated at 500 to 600—"Haji Sudi," my late headman—How he came to join the Mullah—Spend the 4th till the 17th of June at Sanala—Get news of other column and orders to march to join them at Lassadar—Poor sport near Sanala—A big dhero head—March to Lassadar and effect junction with first column.

THE fighting finished before noon on June 3rd, and we then counted our losses; these were five men killed and eight wounded that morning. During the previous evening we had lost four men killed and one wounded, making a total for both days of nine killed and nine wounded. Of these latter one man belonging to the Levy afterwards died of his wounds. Our total casualties were therefore only eighteen, and we had much reason to be thankful for getting off with such slight loss.

Of the nine men killed six belonged to the Levy, and three to the spearmen and tribal horsemen. Of the nine wounded, five belonged to the Levy, three to the spearmen, whilst the other was my interpreter, Abdi Athi, a most excellent man, who was hit by a slug, or small bullet, in the thigh, a wound which troubled him for about a month; after that it healed completely. Amongst the killed was a Havildar of the Military Police, Abdi Yunis by name, one of the section commanders of H Company, a man whom I was extremely sorry to lose. None of the British or Native officers (Jemadars Mahomed Yusuf, and Jama Said, both of the Military Police) were touched.

In a short time the party I had sent out returned, and reported that none of the enemy remained on our side of the hills. They brought in thirteen rifles which they had picked up from dead men; also a lot of spears and shields, and some bows and arrows found alongside dead Midgans. I was very glad that none of the latter had been able to shoot their wicked little arrows into our Zariba

These arrows are almost invariably dipped in a very deadly poison, and a wound from one of them is very difficult—in fact, it is said to be impossible—to cure. I fancy that we succeeded in killing considerably more than thirteen of the enemy's riflemen, as we always turned a heavy fire on to any bush from which came a puff of smoke, and generally succeeded in silencing the firer, but I expect that a good number of firearms were picked up from their late owners and carried away by other men in their flight. The rifles we got were of many different kinds, mostly of old patterns. Amongst them was one British Government Snider, and among the various cartridges taken was one for a ·577 Express, with "Holland & Holland, London," on the base. The case, which was made of solid drawn brass, had been cut down to fit the chamber of the Snider. There were also two decidedly ancient muzzle-loaders, mere gas-pipes, the barrels literally fastened to the stocks with bits of wire and leather. The man who would dare to fire one of them must have had nerves of cast steel.

We now went outside to count and bury the enemy's dead, and found that they had lost heavily, especially about 200 yards from the Zariba, this being the point where they had hesitated and then turned back. We counted about 130 dead, and dragged them some distance down wind. At 2 p.m. there was a sudden alarm, and we all hastened back to the Zariba. A few horsemen had been seen about a couple of miles distant to the south-east, going away towards the hills. We saw no more of them, but I did not consider it advisable to let the men leave camp any more that day, now that we had cleared the immediate neighbourhood of corpses. We therefore spent the remainder of the afternoon in strengthening the camel Zariba in places, and in putting some finishing touches to the upper Zariba as well.

We had a fairly peaceful night, but the men were a little "jumpy." About midnight we were all aroused by some five or six shots in rapid succession, fired from the lower Zariba, close to the water's edge. The sentries swore

that they had heard something splashing in the water, and had seen some men moving near the further edge of the pond. Nothing was there to be seen, and the rest of the night passed without further alarms. From information I subsequently gathered it appears that some six or eight men really were in the vicinity of our camp that night, and were trying to sneak past us towards the hills, but bolted on hearing the shots.

Next day, June 4th, we removed the rest of the dead men and all the dead horses we could find. Fortunately the *Haga* wind had set in by now, and as this wind always blows steadily from one quarter for about four months in the year, roughly from June to September, we had merely to drag all bodies a sufficient distance to leeward. Luckily there was a hollow about 600 yards distant, down wind, among some rocks, and the ground here was broken up by very deep fissures which served as extempore graves for most of the enemy's dead. It was just as well we found these conveniences to hand, as we had little or nothing to dig

graves with. Moreover, no sane Somali could ever be induced to bury any man who did not belong to his own tribe, and as for performing this rite for an enemy—one, moreover, who had just fought against him and been killed in the act—well, a man who would do such a thing must be either mad or—a Sahib, a being whose eccentricities are understood only by Allah himself!

By turning the prisoners under a guard on to this unpleasant job, we eventually got the neighbourhood cleared of our defunct neighbours, both men and animals, and we never suffered any sickness from their proximity—in fact, we had little or no illness at all at Sanala.

We found in all 180 of the enemy's dead round the Zariba, and as it was practically certain that at least another 20 must have got away mortally wounded, and died within a radius of two or three miles, we may put down their loss at 200 in killed alone. Now if we allow two men killed out of every five hit—a very liberal allowance, in my opinion, considering the raw recruits who did the shooting

—we have 200 killed and 300 wounded, total 500 casualties, which include all those carried off during the night between the first and second fights. Judging by what we afterwards heard from prisoners taken by the first column, and from other sources, this estimate was slightly under the mark, the total loss being about 600 in all—and I think this is pretty near the mark, viz., between 500 and 600 casualties all told. From all accounts the Maxim seems to have had a great effect on the enemy: the continuous loud reports of the ·450-bore, and the steady shower of big, heavy bullets appearing to have thoroughly shaken their nerves.

Mahomed Abdullah himself, with his "staff," viz., Sultan Nur, late chief of the Habr Yunis tribe, and Haji Sudi, his chief adviser, watched the fight from the hills to the south, only leaving when they saw that they were hopelessly beaten. The Mullah apparently soundly rated his followers on their failure the previous day, and threatened them with dire vengeance in the event of a second repulse. He also

appears to have worked up their religious enthusiasm with the old story of their adversaries' bullets turning to water, and to have raised their cupidity by saying that inside our Zariba they would find the dead body of Colonel Swayne, and that within his body were bars of gold!

His chief adviser, known as Haji Sudi, was in reality my old headman, Ahamed Warsama, who had been with me during my trip in 1895. The very day I arrived in Aden in 1901 I heard that he had gone over to the Mullah, and on arriving in Berbera I made many inquiries as to the truth of this report, and found out that it was undoubtedly the case. The way in which he came to be an adherent of Mahomed Abdullah is worthy of mention, as throwing some light on the latter's character, and showing how well he could adopt a conciliatory policy towards those whom he wished to gain over to his side.

Ahamed Warsama belonged to the Adan Madoba tribe, and one day, just when the Mullah was beginning to make his power felt,



[*Photo. by Author.*

Group of Somalis.

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Mullah turned to the latter and threatened to use all his influence, religious and temporal, against them, and to bring down on them all the other tribes who were under his influence unless they obeyed. As the Ali Gheri have very large herds both of sheep and camels, this would have been a grand chance for the neighbouring tribes, of which they would not have hesitated to avail themselves. The result of this threat was that the Ali Gheri agreed not only to restore the looted camels, but to pay another hundred as blood-money for the death of Haji Sudi's brother. Thus the latter gained a hundred camels, and the Mullah got as an adherent a man whose experience of the world, and of the British Sahib and his ways, was of the greatest use to him, Haji Sudi having been headman to various expeditions, and having also spent some time as interpreter on an English man-of-war. In addition to Somali he could speak English, Hindustani, Arabic, and Swahili, so he was not a man whose services could be lightly dispensed with. It has often made me think with regret of the many times

I could have blown this rascal's head off in 1895 *if* I had only known! At the same time he might have done the same to me, if *he* had only known what the future was to be.

On the evening of the 4th of June I got two runners away with letters to Burao, promising them one camel each if they got through. They started just after dark, and, travelling by night and hiding by day, eventually arrived there in safety. We were also able to let the camels out a short distance to graze, bringing them in early. Poor beasts! they were glad enough to get out, having been nearly thirty-six hours without food, as it was of course quite impossible to send them out at all the previous day. The tribal horsemen also reconnoitred the ground up to about five miles from the Zariba, reporting no enemy within that distance.

On the 5th they again went out in the morning and returned in the evening, saying that they had gone about twelve miles and seen nothing. On the 6th I sent off two runners to try and find Colonel Swayne, giving them a letter with an account of the fighting. These

men returned safely two days later, but without having delivered the letter, as the first column had moved on beyond where they expected to find it, and it would have been unsafe for them to have proceeded further into the enemy's country. On the 9th I got a letter from Colonel Swayne congratulating us on our victory, which he had heard of from prisoners he had taken. In this letter he told me how his column had got on to the heels of the flying enemy and pursued them a long way, burning the Mullah's village at Wayla-hed, and killing many of his followers.

On the 10th I heard that the Abyssinians were said to be at Bohotlé, about two days to the south-west, whereupon I sent a letter to Major Hanbury Tracy giving our news, and asking him to try and communicate with Colonel Swayne. This report (*re* the Abyssinians) proved to be absolutely without any foundation, and the messengers returned with this news in a couple of days, adding, however, that there was a vast quantity of camels and sheep belonging to the Ali Gheri



and other Dolbahanta tribes collected at and round about Bohotlé.

On the 12th about 180 men of the Habr Toljala (a friendly tribe) came in from the northward to take charge of our camels, and on the 14th I was able to send off over 1,800, of which I was very glad to get rid.

On the 15th we at last got definite news from the first column as to their whereabouts, and I received orders to move with my whole force after meeting Captain Friederichs, and join hands with Colonel Swayne at Lassadar, about a day's march to the south.

On the evening of the 16th Captain Friederichs and Lieutenant Byrne came in with a small force *en route* for Burao, to operate against certain tribes near there who were expected to give trouble; but as these tribes had just sent in their emissaries to me, and I had despatched them to Colonel Swayne, Friederichs and Byrne both returned with me to Lassadar on the next day. Captain Boulton, I.M.S., our medical officer, also accompanied this force, having come as soon

as he could from the first column to see to our wounded.

The next morning, June 17th, we sent off a caravan to Burao consisting of all the wounded and any men who were not fit for hard work. This party was placed under command of a Native officer who had come from the first column, and the caravan was accompanied by a hospital assistant and an escort sufficiently strong to take the whole safely to Burao. In the evening we marched out of Sanala *en route* for Lassadar, camping for the night at a spot about five miles from our Zariba.

Sanala and its neighbourhood is not a good district for sport. Of course we had not very many opportunities for shooting, but after it was clear that the enemy had left the neighbourhood we hunted pretty thoroughly for about eight or ten miles round camp, but saw nothing except an occasional wart hog and a few dhero, all of which were uncommonly wild. Lieutenant Murray, however, got two or three dhero, one a beauty with horns 12¼ inches long—a good deal the best head I had seen up

to that time, though I have since measured one with horns 12½ inches, shot by Lieutenant Dixon. I was told that the people in this part of the country habitually ride the dhero, killing them with spears. This must be very fine sport, and must require a good man and a good horse, but it makes the game as wild as hawks.

On the morning of the 18th of June, at 10.30 a.m., we marched into Lassadar, where we joined hands with the first column, and I received the warmest congratulations from all the officers on the result of the fighting on the 2nd and 3rd.

CHAPTER VIII

(By LIEUTENANT A. C. H. DIXON, WEST INDIA REGIMENT)

The pursuit of the Mullah by the first column, and their itinerary between the 1st and 17th of June, 1901.

ABOUT 4 p.m. on May 31, 1901, Captain McNeill, with Lieutenants Murray, Lamprey, and Younghusband, together with about 500 men and 3,500 camels, and all the baggage which we, as a light column did not require, left our Zariba, and moved into the new and very strong Zariba which we had been preparing during the day.

The next morning was spent in packing up and getting everything ready for an early afternoon start, but our operations in this respect were much interfered with by a series



of alarms, when of course every one had instantly to leave what he was doing and rush to his post at the Zariba.

I had the misfortune to be having a bath (the first for some days) when one of these alarms occurred, so, armed with a revolver, a carbine, and a bath-towel, I prepared to face the Mullah, and his hordes of equally unclothed savages.

The cause of these disturbances was invariably the same, viz., some of our tribal scouts coming in at full gallop on their ponies. During the course of the morning a small patrol which I had sent out brought in three prisoners, who stated that there was a large body of the enemy following us up. About 2 p.m. all was ready, and we moved off. Spread out in front fanwise across the plain were the Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry, then came an advance guard of one company covered by a screen of scouts; following this was the transport, consisting of some 300 camels and 100 donkeys, whilst about 200 yards out on either flank there was one company protected

by flanking scouts, and likewise one in rear, the 5th Company being held in reserve, and ready at any moment to move up in support of any threatened point. Besides this we had 250 camels for eating purposes ; but to prevent, as far as possible, their interfering with the mobility of the column, these were kept well out on a rear flank.

As we moved along our scouts kept bringing in a continual stream of prisoners, in fact every hollow we came to seemed to contain one or two, but little news was to be gathered from them beyond what we already knew.

About 5.30 p.m., just as it was growing dusk, heavy firing was heard in front, and expecting that the Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry had come in touch with the enemy, the Reserve Company under Lieutenant Dickinson was sent forward in support, whilst the column made a right wheel, and proceeded to "Zariba up" amongst the sand-hills of Assoura.

It was an unfortunate spot for a Zariba, as there were no thorn bushes, and we had to do the best we could with the trees available,

plentifully mixed with barbed wire. Shortly afterwards the Mounted Corps and Reserve Company came in, but with little news, save that they had come in contact with a few of the Mullah's scouts upon whom they had opened fire.

As we learned afterwards, the Mullah, who with his force was hidden in the hills close at hand, had decided to attack us that night, and, in fact, after we had zariba'd up had completely surrounded us, but he yielded to the advice of Sultan Nur that he should first attack the weaker column at Sanala, when, if they were successful, they would be the better by some 400 rifles and unlimited ammunition. The cry of a hyæna was given (the signal for retirement previously arranged between them) and they all silently vanished into the night.

We started at dawn next morning, a certain number of the enemy's horsemen hanging around the column, but out of range, all day. Nothing of interest occurred until we got to our camping ground, when, upon the distant hills, the enemy sent up a beacon fire, pre-

sumably to warn those in charge of the Mullah's flocks and herds at Wayla-hed of our approach. Captain Phillips, R.E., nearly met with an accident as he was marking out this camp, a large leopard springing out of a bush at him and narrowly missing his head; unfortunately before he could get his carbine ready the animal disappeared into the neighbouring bushes, and we never saw it again. Next day at noon we reached Tifafleh, a large pool about 20 feet deep and 300 yards long, in the middle of an enormous open plain, and here every one enjoyed a bath, whilst the ·303 machine gun did a little practising at some very distant horsemen (Mullah's scouts), but with no result.

Reaching Dohun about 3 p.m., we entered the Odergoia Valley, where a delightful change in the character of the country rejoiced the hearts of both man and beast. Instead of the bare plains covered with sand and stones, or the equally monotonous thorn-bush jungle, we waded up to our knees through waving green grass, whilst surrounding us on all sides

were rocky, barren mountains, towering up some 6,000 feet to the elevated plateau of the Haud.

We made our Zariba at the north end of the valley, or rather Nature had made it for us, and we strengthened it; for it consisted of an open patch in the middle of an enormously thick growth of hig, a species of aloe, sharp as a sword, and quite impregnable.

The same night we sent out patrols in all directions.

To understand properly what followed it is necessary to describe the country surrounding Odergoia and our Zariba.

The Odergoia Valley is the first of a series of many hundreds, and all exactly alike. They are either round or oblong in shape, quite flat, and surrounded on all sides by mountains, with narrow openings one into the other, and occasional openings into the vast plain to the north; whilst on the south side are rugged mountains through which are occasional passes hitherto untrodden by the foot of a white man.

The Odergoia Valley has two entrances

rom the plains, one about the middle to the north, and the other some two miles behind our Zariba to the west, and separated from us by a deep nullah, whilst some five miles to the east was the opening into the next valley.

Early next morning our patrols began coming in at intervals with prisoners, and we heard for the first time of Captain McNeill's fight at Sanala, and the accounts they gave us turned out subsequently to be very correct.

More patrols were sent out during the course of the morning, and several small skirmishes took place with stray parties of the enemy, and we secured about 20 horses.

At 1 p.m. numerous horsemen were seen by our patrols passing along the open plains to the north, on the far side of the ridge, and evidently making for the central opening to our valley, whilst some 4,000 odd spearmen were heading for the western entrance. As the prisoners we had captured had told us that the Mullah had sworn to attack us in this valley, and it certainly looked as though he was going to, we promptly closed and

manned the Zariba, and, full of excitement, awaited his attack.

Unfortunately this was not forthcoming, so the Commanding Officer determined to move out and attack the spearmen, who were evidently making their retreat into the fastnesses of the mountains.

The Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry were sent on ahead, whilst we proceeded with all our transport to cross the aforementioned nullah, which consisted of a precipitous descent into a river-bed, and an equally precipitous ascent on the far side. Barely half the column was across this when the Mullah, Sultan Nur, and Hadji Sudi, with some 200 horsemen, appeared through the northern opening to the valley, and wheeling into two lines came straight for the rear of our column.

We subsequently discovered that they were unaware of our presence, and were making for a pass which was a short cut to the Mullah's headquarters at Wayla-hed. On their discovering us, they immediately turned about

and rode straight down the valley, upon which our rearguard fired a volley, but they were too far off for this to have much effect.

The Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry, who had in the meantime been recalled, then came up and tried to open fire with the ·303 Maxim gun, but unfortunately this jammed, and could not at the moment be got to work. The combined mounted corps then started in pursuit, which was continued for over fifty miles. The country round was absolutely unknown to us, and the odds against our coming up with the Mullah's force on these rocky mountain paths were enormous. The whole party, pursued and pursuers, vanished through the narrow opening to the east, and that was the last we, the Infantry and transport, saw or heard of them till next day.

As the surrounding mountains were full of detached parties of the enemy, we immediately set about getting the transport back across the nullah, and safely into our old Zariba, and leaving two companies and all the spearmen as a guard against possible attack, the remaining



three companies started off in support of the mounted troops.

All this had of course taken a considerable time, and night was upon us before we could even get across the valley; it was pitch dark, no one knew the road, nor did we know which direction the pursuit had taken.

Eventually after spending about two hours falling into nullahs, and knocking our shins up against rocks, only about half a mile had been covered since darkness came on, so it was decided to return to the Zariba and take the whole column on at dawn next day. During the night a messenger arrived saying the mounted corps were at Las Afwena, about twenty miles away, and starting at dawn we reached them at 2 p.m. Our road after leaving the valley turned due south, and we soon realised that we had done wisely in giving up the attempt of a night march, for the road consisted of a narrow mountain path strewn with loose boulders, with deep ravines made by mountain torrents, difficult to negotiate even by daylight, crossing it every 200 or

300 yards. Even at the start we found the pursuit had not been fruitless, for many a corpse lay among the surrounding hillocks.

On arrival at Las Afwena we learnt that after a headlong pursuit up this pass, during which a very large percentage of the enemy were slain, darkness had come on and the Mullah, Sultan Nur, and Hadji Sudi, with a few men, had escaped into the Haud, owing to the darkness it was impossible to say in which direction, and the pursuit had reluctantly to be given up.

About fifty miles had been covered, and both men and animals were in the last stage of exhaustion, a good many of the horses dying from this cause during the pursuit. Starting at dawn next morning, we traced them up to Annaharigley, a surface water-hole about eight miles out on the Haud, where there were evidences of a very rapid flight the night before. Here we halted for two days as there was good grazing, which the animals needed badly after their hard work, and also that we might gain some reliable information.



the "Mad" Mullah

On the 8th we started for Beretableh, to reach which we went through a pass, the road of which was originally constructed by the Phœnicians in some bygone age. The rocks on either side had carved on them many curious inscriptions which of course we were unable to decipher.

Nothing of any interest occurred after this until we reached Lassadar on June 17th, when we were joined by Captain M^{c}Neill and the other column.



CHAPTER IX

Arrival at Lassadar—Hear news and plans for future movements—March against the Arasama and Ali Gheri tribes—Reach Jilib—March same night and surprise the Rer Haggar next day—Reach Bohotlé—Stop three days—Sport near Bohotlé—March south against Ali Gheri—Long day in dense jungle—Reach Kourmis—Halt a week there—Sport near Kourmis—Novel way of punishing a man for sleeping on camel guard.

ON arrival at Lassadar we heard all the news of what had befallen the first column since they left us on June 1st, and we also learned what were Colonel Swayne's plans for the next move.

When the Mullah had been chased out of British into Italian territory, the Commandant of the Levy had written to the Consul-General asking for authority to follow him, and in the meantime he had determined to take steps to punish those tribes which had sided with him (the Mullah), and who had joined in the attack on our Zariba at Sanala. Many of the men who had fought against us had now gone back



to their Karias—no doubt ready to rise again with Mahomed Abdullah, as soon as ever the coast was clear. The two principal offenders were the Ali Gheri and the Arasama tribes, who had for a long time made the whole Dolbahanta country unsafe for Europeans without a large escort; it was now time to settle with them once and for all. Bohotlé, a well-known watering-place, was the most convenient base from which to operate, and on the afternoon of June 18th we started in that direction.

On the 19th, after passing Wood-wood in the morning, we reached Jilib about 1 p.m., and halted there till evening. Meanwhile the mounted troops had started off to round up some Karias in the vicinity, and had not returned when we started again, which we did about 6 p.m. the same evening, leaving two companies at Jilib. We marched steadily till about nine, when the moon went down; we then slept on the ground where we were, starting again at dawn the next morning. After going about nine miles we came on a



cluster of Karias belonging to the Rer Haggar, a sub-tribe of the Arasama. The various companies were sent out, each under a British officer, to capture and bring to one place as many camels and sheep as possible, and by noon there were gathered together into one central open space about 2,000 camels, and more sheep than I could have believed any single tribe in Somaliland possessed. The whole plain was simply covered with them, and they were still pouring in when we started in the afternoon for Bohotlé, said to be twenty-one miles distant. I estimated the number of sheep at about 15,000, but others put it at 20,000 to 25,000, and I daresay this was not far off the mark, considering that they never stopped coming in before we left. Of course we could not carry away with us anything like the whole of this crowd, so most of the sheep were divided amongst some Rer Haggar women, who had helped to drive them in from the Karias. Eventually we started for Bohotlé shortly before 3 p.m., taking with us all the camels we had captured and as many



sheep as we could drive, which was but a small portion of what we had collected. We were agreeably surprised to discover that our destination was only about fourteen instead of twenty-one miles off, and when we reached Bohotlé, which we did about 7 p.m., we found that the mounted corps and the two companies that had been left at Jilib had already arrived, and had made a strong Zariba into which we drove all our captures. The Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry had also made a good haul, mostly of sheep, which, when added to what we had ourselves brought in, made a good two days' work. We were all glad to get some fresh mutton to eat, as it formed a most agreeable change, both for officers and men, from the camel meat we had been living on for the last three weeks.

From the 21st to the 23rd of June we remained at Bohotlé, partly to rest the troops and partly to get information as to the movements and whereabouts of the Ali Gheri to the southwards.

During these three days I tried the surrounding jungle to see what game was to be

found in this neighbourhood. There was but little to be seen—only some dik dik and an occasional geranook, though one day I saw a dibtag and followed him for a considerable distance without managing to get a shot. There were two distinct varieties of dik dik here, one being the ordinary or "Gol Ass" (red belly) which is found further north and is the most commonly distributed over Somaliland; the other the "Gusli" variety (or Gunlher's dik dik), which is considerably larger, and with somewhat longer horns. The body, too, is of a different colour, being much greyer, without the red marking underneath which distinguishes the "gol ass." The most striking feature, however, of the "gusli" is its upper lip, which protrudes right over, and overhangs the lower lip, giving the animal a strange tapir-like appearance. I managed to get two specimens of this variety with fair horns.

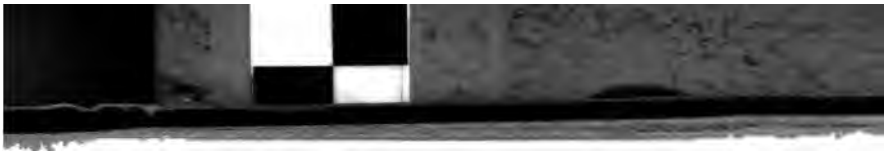
On the 24th of June, leaving two officers and about 100 men at Bohotlé, we made an afternoon march to the southward, camping that night after going about eight miles. The



[*Photo. by Lieut Salmon.*

A river scene.

[*To face page* 136.

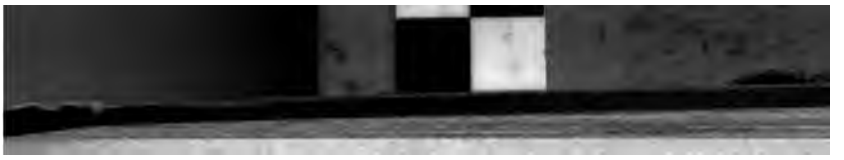


the "Mad" W[illegible]

next day the [illegible] we [illegible]
in the same [illegible]
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noon marches we passed [illegible]
looking places for [illegible]
dibtag about [illegible]
emerging from [illegible]
surrounds [illegible]
shoot now for fear [illegible]
made a note of the [illegible]
come back by the [illegible]

On the [illegible] we [illegible]
attack some [illegible]
distance from [illegible]
had moved [illegible]
which we had [illegible]
were at a [illegible]
course these [illegible]
ground and [illegible]
dense jungle [illegible]
result was a [illegible]
which lasted [illegible]
little damage [illegible]
Karias with [illegible]





next day, the 25th, we continued our journey in the same direction, doing about twenty-two miles. During both the morning and afternoon marches we passed through some likely-looking places for game—in fact I saw some dibtag about 8 a.m. on an open plain, just after emerging from the thick thorn jungle which surrounds Bohotlé. We could not of course shoot now for fear of giving the alarm, but I made a note of the place in case we should come back by the same route.

On the 26th we started at 1.45 a.m. to attack some Ali Gheri Karias situated some distance from our camp. We found that they had moved into some very thick bush, through which we had to follow them, and in which we were at a considerable disadvantage, as of course these people knew every inch of the ground, and had purposely moved into this dense jungle to escape us if possible. The result was a running fight with the Ali Gheri which lasted till nearly noon, but with very little damage being done on either side. The Karias with their camels and other live stock

were scattered all through the bush, and the various companies soon lost sight of each other on account of the thickness of the jungle, and the number of small Karias in separate places; consequently only a general direction could be maintained. All the companies turned up by night-time at our new camp, which was pitched at a water-hole called Haigallé, about fifteen miles from this jungle, but they were never again together.

During this day, although no damage was done, a fairly lively time ensued when the various companies, unable to see one another, began firing, which they did whenever they came upon a Karia or a batch of camels. It was impossible to tell from what quarter a bullet might come, and I think we were all relieved that no accident occurred. Added to this there was, of course, a certain risk of being rushed in the thick bush, as it was very hard to keep the companies intact, and had the Ali Gheri really made a determined stand they most certainly could have inflicted some loss on us. The risk in reality was but



small, as, once we got into the bush, our men kept the Ali Gheri on the run, never giving them time to form up. All the companies certainly worked very well that day, and it was a long day too, as we started at 1.45 a.m., and some of the companies did not get into camp till about 9 p.m. that night. This is the sort of work a Somali loves. Put him on to any looting job, and he is as happy as the proverbial sand-boy, and appears to be absolutely insensible to fatigue as long as there is the remotest possibility of his seeing the ghost of a camel that he can capture. Owing to the dense jungle we did not get nearly so much live stock as we did on the 20th, as a lot got away; but it was a good day's work all the same, and a large number of the camels that temporarily escaped were afterwards captured and brought into Kourmis.

On the 27th we marched soon after dawn and got into Kourmis in about an hour, Haigallé being only about three miles distant.

We remained here till the 6th of July, and as Haigallé and Kourmis were the only two



watering-places in that district, we were pretty well masters of the situation. Companies were sent out in various directions to bring in camels from the surrounding country, and soon we had quite a large number, for which we had to build extra Zaribas. These were placed in such a position that any one attacking them would have come under a very heavy fire from our main Zariba, in which we kept all our riding camels and ponies, and a certain number of baggage camels as well. While at this camp we again heard that the Abyssinians were quite close—they were then said to be only about two days' march to the south-west. We sent out runners and endeavoured to communicate with them, but they had moved off towards their own country. This was a disappointment to us all, as we would have much liked to see the Abyssinian army; but we never got another chance.

While waiting here for the various headmen to come in and make their submission, we were generally able to devote the mornings and evenings to Shikar, but I cannot say that any



of us were very successful. There were some geranook, but very few within a couple of hours of the camp; the Colonel got one, and I managed to secure another, but neither of them had a remarkable head. There were also a few lesser bustard to be got, and these, though easy shooting and not very wild, made a welcome addition to our bill of fare.

When returning one morning from shooting I witnessed a decidedly amusing spectacle, and saw a Somali get about as great a fright as I suppose it is possible for a man to receive. It happened in this wise: When about a mile from the Zariba we came amongst our camels, which were out grazing under charge of a certain number of men of the Levy and a contingent of spearmen. At one place there was a bunch of four of five animals under charge of one of the latter who was comfortably asleep in the shade of a bush. We were walking very quietly at the time, and came quite close on the slumbering man without awakening him; in fact we were within 5 yards when he moved slightly. Seeing this, my Shikari,

with my rifle in his hand, and shouting "Allah! Allah!" at the top of his voice, rushed forward, and getting hold of the "tobe," or cloth sheet, which the sleeping man wore, quickly wound it round his head and arms. The spearman being awakened in such a fashion got a good fright to begin with, and he had just commenced to yell when the "tobe" was wound round him. His struggles now were tremendous, as he was pretty tightly fastened up in the "tobe," and every moment he expected to be his last, naturally concluding that he had been caught asleep by the enemy. Presently he got free, and I never saw a man look so scared in all my life; his face was ashy grey, and he was trembling in every limb! Two or three other men had now turned up, and when the wretched spearman had freed himself he was greeted by an ironical howl of laughter. Altogether I do not think I saw a man more "scored off." I now proceeded to explain to him of what an offence he had been guilty, and I don't think that man ever again went to sleep on camel guard.



All this time I had kept in my mind the two places we had passed on our way south, and as Colonel Swayne had now decided to leave Kourmis about the end of the first week in July and march back to Bohotlé, I got permission to start off a day ahead of the main column, and to take a batch of about 2,000 camels to Bohotlé by the way we had come, while the rest of the force followed by a more direct route to the west.

I must say I was glad to leave Kourmis; there was little or nothing in the surrounding country to recommend it, and the ground had become very foul all round camp from the enormous amount of live stock we had collected. The water, too, was only a surface pool at the best of times, and was now a thick viscid liquid composed of about half water, a quarter mud, and a quarter various substances. Consequently it was with a light heart that I started for Bohotlé at daybreak on the 6th of July with my convoy of camels, as I had every hope of getting some dibtag on the way back; nor was I disappointed.

CHAPTER X

Leave Kourmis with camels for Bohotlé—No game near Kourmis—Miss an oryx—Find dibtag—Difficult stalk—Shoot a buck—Excellence of the Mauser rifle—Pitch camp—Get another buck—Hear from Colonel Swayne—Miss a dibtag buck—Shoot another—Long stalk and secure a fourth—Reach Bohotlé—Convoy with stores and letters.

I WAS up before daybreak on the 6th of July, but it took some little time to separate the 2,000 camels I had to take with me from the remainder. At last, after the usual amount of shouting, yelling, and gesticulation inseparable from anything to do with camels in which the Somali is engaged, I got fairly started at about a quarter past seven, and in about two hours struck the track by which we had marched south from Bohotlé; we then kept on steadily till



2 p.m., when I halted in an open space, clear of bushes, where there was good grazing. This place was a little short of where I had seen a lot of tracks during our afternoon march on the 25th of June; so, after having had something to eat, I started off about three o'clock to see if there was any game in the neighbourhood. During the morning, though I had made a *détour* to one side of the line of march, I had seen nothing except one geranook, nor was there much sign of game of any sort, grazing being very bad except close round Kourmis; even there it had been nearly all finished by the large numbers of camels with us, which had, therefore, to be sent further afield every day to get any grass at all.

We made a round of about ten miles that afternoon and found plenty of tracks, but saw nothing till just before sunset, when we came on a herd of oryx grazing in an open place. There seemed to be some good heads amongst them, and, after a somewhat difficult and very uncomfortable stalk, flat on my stomach the



whole way, I managed to get a shot at about 170 yards. The setting sun was shining almost straight into my eyes, and there was a strong breeze blowing from the left, for which I failed to make sufficient allowance, and consequently had the pleasure of seeing the bullet strike to the right. The whole herd thereupon broke into a gallop and disappeared in some thin scrub jungle, and as it was then too late to follow them, we returned to camp, which we reached about 7.15. I did not feel best pleased with myself that evening, for, in addition to my missing the oryx, my hunting-knife had slipped from its sheath and been lost in the jungle.

The next morning I started at daybreak, having given orders that the camels were to wait about two hours before moving, so as to give me ample time to get well ahead. At about half-past eight we emerged on to the edge of the plain on which I had seen dibtag when coming south. Almost at once we saw one to the left of the track, but it moved off before we could tell if it



was a male or female, nor did we see it again. Whilst trying to make out with the glasses where it had gone to, my Syce, who had remained behind with the pony, came up to say he had seen three females and one male quite close on the right. We went after them at once, and soon spotted them, but they had moved on some distance, and were then grazing in an open bit of ground where they required very careful stalking. We had to make a considerable *détour*, and, had it not been for a favourable depression in the ground and two or three small bushes, I do not think we would ever have got near them at all. As it was we succeeded in approaching within about 130 yards of the dibtag, which then became alarmed and began to move off. After going a short way the buck stood, but he was almost directly facing me and gave but a small mark to fire at. The wind was blowing a gale, and I found it quite impossible to keep the rifle steady when firing from the kneeling position, as I was obliged to do. The result was a miss,



and all four went off at a gallop. Luckily they circled round to our left, and by running hard we managed to cut them off in such a manner that they passed us at about 180 yards, and I got in a shot at the buck as he came along in rear of the does. I was using a ·275 Mauser-Rigby rifle, and shooting with a soft-nosed split bullet, which caught the dibtag rather low but expanded beautifully, passing through the stomach and taking out a large bunch of his intestines. This, of course, practically settled him, though he carried on for nearly 300 yards, lying down at intervals, and requiring another shot before we got him. His horns measured 10¾ inches in length.

I may mention here that I have found the ·275 Mauser, shooting the soft-nosed split bullet, to be an exceedingly accurate and effective rifle. This bullet expands most satisfactorily on even a very soft substance—as, for instance, on this unfortunate dibtag—while at the same time it possesses sufficient weight and penetration to crumple up, in a



most effectual manner, very much larger animals than dibtag. Altogether I consider the Mauser to be by far the best rifle I have ever used for all antelopes that I have yet had the chance of shooting—including even the greater kudu—and infinitely superior both in trajectory and killing power, to the ·303, with which I have lost a very large percentage of animals hit, though I have used several different sorts of bullets with the latter rifle. At the same time I would never recommend such a small bore for use against dangerous game, as no small light bullet, however deadly, or however great may be its velocity, can give the same shock that a larger bullet such as that fired from a ·577 does. It is this shock, this impact of a heavy mass, that is required to stop or turn a charging animal.

After this success we went on some distance further and chose a site for the camp, leaving a man behind to indicate the place to the camel-men when they came up. We then went on and made a round of about five

miles, getting back to camp shortly before noon without having seen anything else.

I did not strike camp that afternoon, as I wished to give the camels as much grazing as possible; but my Shikari and I, with one Syce and a pony and riding camel, started again shortly after 2 p.m. to try the ground between where we had halted and the heavy scrub jungle which surrounds Bohotlé. We rode for about three hours without seeing anything in the open, and then turned into the edge of the bush which was considerably thinner at this point than further north. The wind still continued to blow very strongly, but this time it proved of service to us by deadening any sounds which we made when walking through the dry grass and scrub. A short distance further on we sighted a male dibtag feeding. Owing to the bushes we did not see him till we had got within 150 yards or so, but, thanks to the wind, he had never heard us. He was standing in the shade of some bushes when I fired, but, overestimating the distance, I missed him, the



bullet going over his back. We immediately lay flat down, and the buck, not being able to make us out, did not go very far, but stopped about 300 yards further on, and we were enabled to stalk him again. I hit him this time, but rather far back, and he went about another quarter of a mile and then lay down behind a bush, when I got up within 10 yards and finished him off with another shot. His horns were slightly smaller than those of the specimen I had shot in the morning. We saw one other buck on our way back, but he was right out in the open and quite unapproachable. I reached camp just after seven o'clock, feeling very pleased with my luck, which certainly had been good, as I had shot two dibtags that day, after having missed each with my first shot.

On arrival in camp about seven o'clock I found a note from Colonel Swayne telling me that he and the remainder of the force had left Kourmis the same day that I had, starting in the evening, while I had gone off in the morning. He was marching to Bohotlé



by a route parallel to and to the west of the one I was taking, and expected to reach his destination the following day.

Next morning, July 8th, I did not start till 6.20, having to wait till the head of the dibtag I killed the previous evening had been skinned, as it was too dark when we got back to attempt to touch it then. I began the day badly, missing a dibtag before we had gone half a mile. He was feeding quietly when we first saw him, but I was afraid he might see my riding camel and pony, which were close behind; added to which it was by this time broad daylight, and being so near camp, where every one was now astir, I thought he might take the alarm and be off at any movement. Ali Borali and I, therefore, went towards him at once, stooping low and moving very fast. This was a mistake, because, when I did get my shot, which I had to take at a distance of about 200 yards, I was quite shaky from running in a constrained attitude. Do what I would I could not hold the rifle steady, so I scored a clean miss. We pursued him some way, and I put in three



more similar shots at between 250 and 300 yards with the same result. I was far too unsteady from running over the broken and rough ground to be able to shoot at such a distance. Had I only hit him I feel sure we would have been able to secure him, as my Syce and pony were close by, and I had also taken Abdi Athi (my interpreter) and his pony with me to point out where the camels were to halt about midday to graze. These two men could easily have ridden him down, had he been wounded, as the ground was quite open at this place and they would never have lost sight of him. I made a great mistake by going in at him at the pace I did, as it quite unsteadied me. Had we only proceeded slowly we would have had a far better chance, as the buck was peacefully feeding, and even if he had been alarmed I do not think he would have gone far.

After this we went some way before sighting anything else—in fact, we saw nothing more on the open plain. We then tried the bush which continues right up to Bohotlé, but for the first seven miles or so we found it interspersed with



open glades, and not nearly so thick as further on. Soon after entering this scrub we sighted a single dibtag buck. He was not very far off, but the intervening bushes were too close together to get a shot at him. I did a careful stalk, crawling from bush to bush, but he had moved on, and for a time we could not make out where he had gone. We knew he could not be far away, and we had just begun cautiously to raise our heads when he suddenly started up and began to make off. He stood again about 90 yards distant but with a small thin bush in front of him, which I feared would turn the bullet. I had to chance it or lose him, so fired, and had the satisfaction of hearing my shot tell loudly. He moved on, but after going a short way again stood, this time with a really thick bush between us. I was moving quietly round to get another chance at him, when he suddenly fell over and I thought he was done for. However, he got up and went another 70 or 80 yards, when he again stood, and I got in another bullet which finished him off, the first shot having hit him rather far back.



His horns were 10¼ inches long—better than those of the dibtag I had got the previous evening, but a little shorter than those of my other. He was killed at 8.30, just twenty-four hours since I had shot the first.

Shortly before ten we saw three does in a big open patch of ground. They were alarmed at something, and soon moved off towards our right, when they were joined by a buck which had been lying down somewhere, and which consequently had not been visible at first. The stalk was rather difficult, as all four were right out in the open and the wind might have been more favourable; they were very wide awake and looking round anxiously on all sides. A friendly ant-heap rose in a direct line between us and the dibtag, which were standing about 130 yards beyond it. Up to this we managed to crawl, flat on our faces, and from one side I got my shot. The buck was standing directly facing me and I had only his chest to fire at—not a large mark at such a distance, but I was lying down and the Mauser shot perfectly true. The dibtag dropped in his tracks and never

moved a single yard. His horns were the longest I had yet got, viz., 11⅛ inches along the curve.

We now saw what had disturbed them, and how fortunate I had been to secure this one. Just before sighting the three does we had seen some of our camels coming up close behind. I immediately sent Abdi Athi back to stop them, as I had given strict orders that they were not to start from camp until I had been gone at least two hours. They had evidently moved before their time, and were now much too close up; had they once got in front of us they would, of course, have effectually spoilt any further chances of sport. Abdi managed to stop them all right before they emerged from the scrub jungle into the open space in which we were then stalking the dibtag, but he had sent a man forward to me to ask how long he was to keep the camels there before again moving on towards Bohotlé. Of course, when he despatched this messenger Abdi Athi did not know we were in sight of game, being unable to see us from where he was. This

man turned up just as we were standing over the fallen buck; had he come a minute sooner he would, to a certainty, have frightened the whole lot. As it was they must have seen him while we were stalking them, and this may possibly have distracted their attention from us, thus enabling me to reach the ant-hill unperceived.

After this we went on to our midday halt, which was reached about 12.30. We saw three more dibtag on the way, but they were either all females or two females and one small male —we could not determine which, as they were in rather thick jungle, and I did not follow them up, not caring to shoot an indifferent head.

We were now close to Bohotlé, and the camels all passed while I was having breakfast. We started again at 3.30 and made a *détour* to the left of the main track, along which the camels were going, as I was in hopes of possibly getting a geranook. We saw one for an instant, but it was off at once, and in following it up we came on four more dibtag—all females



this time. We saw nothing more between this place and Bohotlé, where we arrived at 5.30 p.m.

On arrival I found that the main body had marched in about three hours previously, and that a convoy under command of Captain Sharp had arrived from Burao. With this convoy came Lieutenants Taylor and Walshe, and with them some very welcome and long-expected stores; also a big mail, the first letters we had received for nearly a month.

Thus ended a most satisfactory three days' shoot, one of the very few occasions on which I have been able to combine successfully marching and shooting; but the circumstances were peculiarly favourable, as I only had a few men with me, and all I had to do was to bring the camels safely into Bohotlé. The country, too, was absolutely safe, as we had a strong detachment at the latter place, and Colonel Swayne's column was never very far distant from my camel convoy.



CHAPTER XI

Hear of the Mullah's movements—Colonel Swayne determines to attack him again—All sick men, superfluous live stock, &c., sent to Burao—Scarcity of fodder for the Camel Corps—Leave Bohotlé—One company left at Yahél—Fracas with Mahmud Gerard at Yahél—Excitement when they joined us on the march—Arrive at Kur Gerard and receive news of the close proximity of the Mullah—Night march from Kur Gerard to surprise his camp—Description of position, fight and pursuit at Firdiddin—Flight of Mahmud Gerard—Our losses—Losses of the enemy, who fly south—Return to Kur Gerard with captured loot—Endurance of Somalis—Mullah's losses—Conduct of the Mahmud Gerard.

WHILST at Kourmis we had heard that the Mullah, finding himself unmolested in Italian territory, had again come northwards and crossed the borders of our Protectorate. Colonel Swayne therefore decided on making another attempt to capture him, or at any rate again to expel him from our territories, and to show him that the arm of



Government was sufficiently long to reach him anywhere within British limits, and that he was not to suppose that he could slip across into Italian territory and again return to loot the tribes under our protection as soon as our backs were turned. He was said to be somewhere in the neighbourhood of Berritablé, close to the Anglo-Italian border, but reports varied as to the numbers of his followers.

We halted at Bohotlé till the afternoon of July 9th, preparing for our march eastwards. All the camels that were not necessary for transport or eating purposes, all our prisoners and all sick men were sent back to Burao with a strong escort, under command of Lieutenants Murray and Lamprey. When we were at Bohotlé in June another large batch of camels and cattle had been despatched to Burao escorted by one company, under Lieutenant Younghusband, and accompanied by a few Mounted Infantry and some camel Sowars—the whole being under charge of Captain Merewether. Captain Sharp had

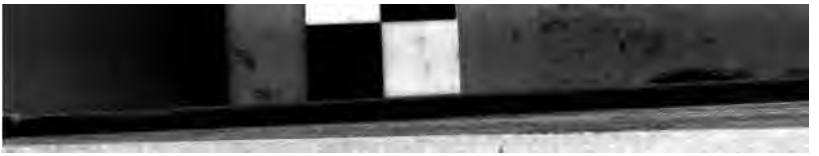


[*Photo. by Author.*

Teaching bugle calls by means of banjo.

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brought up about 140 men with the convoy that had just arrived under his command, and Lieutenants Taylor and Walshe had also accompanied him, so that when we left Bohotlé on July 9th we had one British officer and one company less than before, but every man was perfectly fit, all the sick having been weeded out.

Our chief difficulty lay in the fact that a large consignment of Jowari (grain) and cotton seed, which had been expected to come for the Camel Corps with Captain Sharp's convoy, had not turned up. Captain Bruce, with an escort of camel Sowars, was therefore sent to Burao to see to these supplies and to bring them on at once. Both he and Captain Merewether were expected to join us before we came into collision with the Mullah, but this, owing to our rapid advance, they were unfortunately not able to manage.

Leaving Bohotlé on the afternoon of the 9th of July, we were able to march only a short distance that day, but on the 10th and 11th we covered about forty miles, passing



to the east of Jilib and Wood-wood. On the night of the 11th we still further reduced our impedimenta, leaving behind us everything that was not absolutely necessary, and marching as light as possible. Lieutenant O'Neill, with his company, took charge of all this baggage and marched with it to Yahél, having received instructions to form a strong Zariba there and to await our return, or remain till he got orders to rejoin us at any given place. He was subsequently directed to move to Tiffafli, near which place we met him on the 20th.

We marched again early on the morning of the 12th, leaving Lieutenant Dixon and his company to help Lieutenant O'Neill and his men in their work of building the Zariba and making everything as secure as possible. Lieutenant Dixon had orders, after having done this, to come on the next morning, following in our tracks, and to try and pick up any news he could collect from deserters or from spies who might be hanging about the rear of our column. He rejoined us on the 16th, the night before we attacked the



Mullah, and he had gathered from various sources sufficient information to confirm what we had previously heard from our scouts as to the enemy's position at Firdiddin.

Both Lieutenants Dixon and O'Neill had a somewhat exciting experience at Yahél. It appears that early next morning, the 13th, before it was properly light, every one in their Zariba was awakened by the men turning out and opening fire on a body of horsemen who suddenly galloped over some rising ground in the dim light, and began to pull down the Zariba and try to drive off our camels. Owing to the bad light none of the raiders were killed, but they bolted at once, and then sent in men to say that they were horsemen of the Mahmud Gerard tribe, who, having come as our allies, were then on their way to join Colonel Swayne. They further said that they had mistaken our camels for those of a tribe with whom they were at feud. This, when they could clearly see the green waterproof sheets used as bivouacs by our men! These Mahmud Gerard are known as the worst



reivers in that part of the country, and their conduct at the battle of Firdiddin did not belie their reputation.

We marched only about twelve miles on the 12th, halting for the afternoon a short way east of Yahél while we replenished our water supply at the Yahél River. On the 13th Captain Friederichs left us with a convoy to bring in a further supply of water from some wells a short distance to one side of our direct route. For the next three days, *i.e.*, till the evening of the 16th, we marched comparatively slowly, so as to give him and his heavily laden camels a chance of catching us up. Eventually he and Lieutenant Dixon joined us at Kur Gerard on the evening of the 16th.

On the evening of the 14th the Mahmud Gerard horsemen joined us, and their arrival again caused some excitement.

During the afternoon march two of our Mounted Infantry came galloping back from the front to say that the advance guard, which was supplied by one of the companies under me, had been attacked, and that a big fight



was in progress. I immediately went up to the head of the column, which had meantime halted, and found the advance guard extended and advancing towards some hills to our left front, while the reserve company had doubled up on to some low hills a short distance to the left of the column, and about a quarter of a mile to the rear of the advance guard. There was a small valley between the hills occupied by the reserve company and those towards which the advance guard was moving, and in this valley we could see some horsemen and an occasional glimpse of a white flag: the big fight was conspicuous by its absence. I then joined the advance guard, which was under command of Captain Sharp, and we advanced to the top of the range of hills towards which we were making. Nothing more was to be seen from there, and after a short time a reconnoitring party that had been sent out came in to say that it was the Mahmud Gerard horsemen who were coming in, and who had been fired at by some men of a flanking party, apparently of the reserve



company. Personally, I never heard any shots at all. It must be remembered that we were marching through a country where the Mullah was known to have spies, and where it was possible we might at any time encounter some of his men, while, of course, there was absolutely nothing to distinguish any horsemen who might be friendly to us from others. When friendlies once joined us we gave them small pieces of red cloth, which they fastened to their spears to show that they were our allies.

On the evening of the 16th we encamped at Kur Gerard, having received trustworthy information that the Mullah, with between 600 and 700 riflemen, besides other followers, was encamped on the other side of a hill which rose a short distance beyond our camp. Captain Friederichs and Lieutenant Dixon joined us that night, and Colonel Swayne determined to start about 1 a.m. next morning and surprise the enemy at dawn. We were at a great disadvantage through the non-arrival of Captains Bruce and Merewether with the remainder of the

Camel Corps and the expected Jowari. Riding camels cannot live solely on grass like baggage camels; ours were therefore not in the best of condition, nor were there as many as we might have wished, but we hoped that they would be able to accomplish all that was required of them the next day.

Next morning, the 17th of July, the whole force, with the exception of one company that was left to guard the camp, paraded at about 1.30 a.m. and started just after two o'clock. As it did not get light till about 5.30, we had about three and a half hours' marching in pitch darkness, through scrub jungle most of the way. Everything, however, went without the very slightest hitch, the whole march being carried out in absolute silence and with only one halt for about fifteen minutes, which we made soon after starting, so as to be absolutely sure that everything was all right. This was far and away the best night march I have ever seen carried out, and it was, I think, remarkable, considering that we were marching nearly the whole time through bush and over



decidedly rough ground, uphill too a good part of the way. Our men were certainly wonderfully steady, and behaved on this occasion as if they had been soldiers for years, instead of only for a few months.

When dawn broke we found ourselves just clear of the jungle, and at the upper end of a big valley that sloped away towards the south-east. Down this valley we marched, the mounted troops now being pushed well ahead. After going for about another hour and a half an order came from the Colonel that the reserve company was to come up at once. They went on at the double, and in a short time we heard shots from our front. A few minutes later another message came from Colonel Swayne to say that all the remainder of the Infantry, four companies, were to be brought up immediately. With this message also came news that the Mullah and his followers had been surrounded and were shut up in a Zariba, where they were holding out desperately. This was not by any means true, as we soon found out, but



it was believed at the time, and it made every one extremely anxious to get to the front as soon as possible. Our men would have rushed on as hard as they could go, had we only let them, but we kept them at a steady double, and after going about a quarter of a mile made them break into quick time for a short way ; this steadied them a good deal and got them better in hand.

The valley down which we had been moving since daybreak had now become a good deal broader, and at this point opened out into a plain, but the hills on the right continued for some distance further. About a quarter of a mile ahead a bare spur or ridge ran from these hills on our right straight out into the plain, across our front from right to left. We could now hear pretty heavy firing from this spur, on which we could also see some of our men, so we naturally concluded that the Zariba in which the Mullah and his people were said to be must be just beyond.

The reserve company, which had gone forward in response to the first order from

Colonel Swayne, came into action shortly before the main body of the Infantry got to the ridge. Almost as soon as they reached the crest, and just as they were starting to advance, the company commander Lieutenant Dickinson was wounded, falling with a bullet through his thigh. The other four companies reached the spur about ten minutes later, the two commanded by Captain Phillips on the right, while the other two, under myself, came up on the left, close to the end of the spur.

When we reached the crest we could see no traces of any Zariba, but we saw another similar spur about 500 yards beyond, on which the Mullah's riflemen were extended and from whence they were firing steadily at us, being themselves well sheltered behind some big boulders. The enemy's position was very well chosen, as the spur which they held was slightly lower than the one on which we found ourselves; thus they had the advantage of seeing our men on the sky-line when they got to the crest of our spur. Added to this, when we reached the crest



we found a small tableland about 100 yards broad, across which our men had to advance, without any cover to speak of, until they got to the edge nearest the enemy, from whence they could return his fire and where they were at last fairly well under cover.

As soon as all the Infantry were extended along this edge of the spur a heavy fire was opened on the enemy. They were, however, very well concealed, and it was a little time before they showed any signs of giving way, but the steady fire they were now subjected to was too much for them. One of our Maxims had by this time come into action, and this, as at Sanala, seems to have had considerable effect. The ridge in front of us was now quickly evacuated, and we at once advanced down the slope in front of us, then up and over the spur which had been occupied by the enemy. We saw about thirty dead here.

The enemy's retreat had by this time become a flight, and we immediately took up the pursuit. The ground now became very broken and the jungle denser and denser as we proceeded ;

therefore after continuing the pursuit for about six miles, I halted my two companies and collected all the men I could find. The bush here was very thick in places, and I did not wish to run any chance of being ambushed, as our men had become rather scattered by now, and, as far as I could see, the country in front was getting more broken and bush-covered the further we advanced. The enemy had got a good start of us, and the thick jungle favoured their escape; therefore, as I could observe no signs of the mounted troops, I did not see the advisability of going further. I also knew perfectly well that if our men were to come on any loot they would at once scatter in pursuit of it, and then Heaven only knows when we would have been able to collect them again! I do not believe any Somali could resist the chance of looting a camel, even if he knew that the moment he touched it he would be condemned to eternal perdition and would lose all hope of Paradise hereafter. Fortunately we had found nothing much in the way of booty since the fight, so all were



easily collected. After a short rest we marched back to the ridge, finding on our way many huts, camel-mats, hans (water vessels), &c., belonging to the Mullah, showing how hurriedly everything had been abandoned and how narrow had been his escape. All these we burned.

On our arrival at the scene of the conflict we found a party collecting and burying our dead, and now for the first time we heard exactly what had happened.

During the night march we had seen several big bonfires on the neighbouring hills, and at one time we feared that the Mullah might have got the alarm. It transpired that he had heard about the Mahmud Gerard being "out," and had been told that they were coming to attack him, but he had heard nothing about the movements of our force. Now when our mounted troops went on ahead at dawn, these Mahmud Gerard, all of whom had ponies, dashed forward with the Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry, and went towards where the Mullah's Karia was. His men were,

however, ready for them, and opened fire, whereupon these valiant raiders turned tail and bolted as hard as their horses could lay legs to the ground, nor did we see them again that day. Our mounted troops had now to face the fire of several hundred riflemen, and as they were only about a hundred all told, it was more than they could do to hold the enemy back, emboldened as they were by the flight of the Mahmud Gerard. Whether they would have waited for the latter had they known that even a hundred of our troops were coming, is another matter—probably not, and most certainly not had they known that our whole force was so close up.

Be that as it may, when they saw that the Mahmud Gerard had bolted and that none of our Infantry were then in sight—the mounted troops having pressed on very rapidly since daylight—they probably thought that this was merely a scouting or raiding party sent on by us to help the Mahmud Gerard. The enemy (who were said to have about 600 riflemen) then opened a heavy fire



on our people, who dismounted and held out as long as they could, but were eventually forced to retreat towards the spur which the Mullah's men afterwards held. By the time they had to evacuate this ridge the reserve company, which had been hurried up as soon as the first shots were heard, came into action on our ridge, and, assisted by the mounted troops, succeeded in checking the enemy's advance till the rest of the Infantry arrived.

Meanwhile the Mullah and most of his followers, seeing that they were surprised and had been nearly caught, fled due south, leaving some of the riflemen to hold the ridge till they got away. This they succeeded in doing, as the Mullah, Sultan Nur, and Haji Sudi, with most of their live stock, escaped into the thick jungle which lay behind their position. In fact, the enemy fought what might be termed a very good rear-guard action.

It was when the mounted troops were falling back that poor Captain Friederichs was killed whilst attempting to help a wounded

man. We were all most deeply grieved to hear of his death. His body was recovered and buried before we marched back that afternoon, every officer being present.

Our total losses were one British officer and eleven men killed, and one British officer and seventeen men wounded—in all thirty casualties, out of which total just over twenty belonged to the Camel Corps and Mounted Infantry. Several of our riding camels and horses were also killed. This loss disorganised the mounted troops, and prevented a proper pursuit of the enemy; but for this their losses would have been much heavier than they were. We counted about fifty dead of the Mullah's followers, most of whom belonged to the Migertain tribe, from Italian territory, and many of these wore the regular dress of Soudanese dervishes. Amongst the killed were two of Mahomed Abdullah's brothers and the son of one of the Migertain chiefs.

We afterwards heard that so narrow was the Mullah's escape that he fled southwards across the Haud for four days without even



stopping, many of his men dying of thirst. We were also told that practically all his live stock, except his horses, was abandoned about four or five miles beyond where we stopped the pursuit. Whether this be true or not I cannot say, but personally I am glad we did not come on this lot, partly on account of the difficulty we would have experienced in collecting our men had they once got scattered after loot, and partly because one way and another we captured a large amount of live stock as it was, which gave us a great deal of trouble to drive back to Kur Gerard that evening.

We started on our return at about a quarter to three in the afternoon, and did not get to camp till nine o'clock, having done close on forty miles that day, as nearly as I could judge. As it got dark about seven, it was a very trying business driving the captured camels, sheep, and cattle through the thick jungle after daylight failed, but the Somali shines at this work, and our men did splendidly—in fact, I do not think any animals were lost on the way back. This was a long

and hard day, as we had been going nearly twenty hours, and yet not a man fell out, though two companies had been almost without food for two days. A further mention of this will be found in the chapter about the Somali and his qualifications for military service.

The Mullah suffered very considerable loss as the result of this day's fight. In addition to about fifty dead which we actually counted lying on the ridge, his force lost several men during the pursuit; a number of wounded got away into the jungle, and many must have died of thirst and wounds when flying across the waterless Haud. We also captured about a thousand camels, cattle, and sheep, and burned his Karia to the ground.

Had the Mahmud Gerard not bolted in a body at the first shot, but possessed sufficient pluck to go in at the fugitives when they evacuated the ridge, I feel sure that the enemy's loss during the retreat would have been very much greater, as they showed no fight after we had once got them on the run. I



think every one—British officers and Somalis alike—was thoroughly disgusted with this tribe, more especially as they always had the reputation of being the most dreaded marauders of all the Dolbahanta tribes. In addition to bolting as they did, we afterwards discovered that they had taken advantage of our going into action on the ridge, and had improved the shining hour by driving off a considerable amount of loot that our mounted troops had already captured before they came on the Mullah's position.

It is impossible to say exactly how many rifles the enemy had in their possession. The information we received as to the Mullah's position at Firdiddin was perfectly correct, and all those who gave us this news agreed in putting the number of his riflemen at about 600 or over. Possibly this estimate was fairly correct, but it may of course have been exaggerated, and I doubt if that number had ever been engaged against us, at any rate at the same time. Possibly also some were away looting or guarding live stock, and probably a

good number accompanied Mahomed Abdullah as a personal bodyguard. In that case these latter would not have come into action, as they would never have left the Mullah's side, but would have accompanied him during his flight.



CHAPTER XII

Orders received for return of Expedition—Reasons for these orders—Unsuitability of these orders for situation after the fight at Firdiddin—March to Burao—Violence of wind—Pass Sanala—Great evaporation of water—Shooting near Eyl Dab—Leopard carries kill into a tree—Shoot a lesser kudu near Olassan—Nearly miss camp—Shoot a geranook—Get on to wrong tracks—Shoot another geranook—"Picture shots"—Arrive at Burao—End of Expedition—Duration of Expedition—Distance marched and results accomplished.

ON the 18th of July we started at dawn and marched to Eyl Mado, about fifteen miles, for water, there being none at Kur Gerard.

Orders had now been received from the Foreign Office that operations in the interior against the Mullah were to cease, and that the Expedition was to return. These instructions were probably issued when it was known

that Mahomed Abdullah had been defeated with heavy loss at Sanala, and that Colonel Swayne had fallen on him during his retreat, and chased him out of the British Protectorate. A good deal of anxiety was, I believe, felt at home regarding our force, which was operating so far inland, and was composed almost entirely of men whose fighting qualities had never before been tested. Therefore, when the news of the operations in June was received, a certain sense of relief was experienced, and it was thought that it would be best to be content with what had been done, everything having been so successful. Probably, too, it was not expected that Mahomed Abdullah would again come into British territory. It was considered that enough had been done in the Hinterland to teach him a thorough lesson, and that it would suffice to hold certain posts near the frontiers of the Dolbahanta country in sufficient strength to prevent incursions and raids on the property of tribes nearer the coast; while at the same time, by keeping a fairly strong and mobile garrison



[*Photo. by Author.*

Somali on Wagger Mountain.

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at Burao, a force would be at hand which could, if necessary, assume the offensive against a strong following of the Mullah, should he advance too far north.

As things turned out, I think it was a very great pity that these orders reached us at the time they did ; they were, however, so explicit that no option was left but to return. Had we been able to remain, we could have gone to Berratablé, which was about the same distance from Kur Gerard as Eyl Mado, and where there was a plentiful supply of water. Whilst there we would, to a certainty, have received the submission of many of the Mullah's followers, together with their rifles. As it was, a considerable number of these men returned the next day to Firdiddin to give up their arms, and found we had gone. Had we been at Berratablé they would have taken up our tracks and followed us there. It is certain that ten days' or a fortnight's stay would have meant the collection of at least a number of rifles, while the Mullah would speedily have heard of our presence ; instead of this the next

news he received of us was that we, and all our force, had gone back to Burao. This, to say the least, must have seemed very strange, and must have given him much encouragement. It was very unlucky for us all, and very hard luck on Colonel Swayne, that he had to march his force back, when by staying a little longer so much more might have been accomplished.

We remained at Eyl Mado on the afternoon of the 18th to rest men and animals. On the 19th, after filling all our water-tanks, we made two short marches to the north-west, covering only fifteen miles in the day. On the 20th we marched about twenty-three miles, passing by Odagoya to Tiffafli, where there was good water, and where Lieutenant O'Neill was encamped, having brought his men on there from Yahél. On the 21st we halted at Tiffafli, and on the 22nd marched to Assura, where Colonel Swayne's force had encamped on the evening of the 1st of Juñe, after leaving us at Sanala. During nearly the whole of our journey back to Burao we experienced great



discomfort from the strength of the *Haga* wind, which blew with great violence both by day and night. During the daytime it drove clouds of dust and sand into our eyes, whilst at night it was very hard to keep up our shelters of waterproof sheets, which were constantly being blown down.

On the 23rd we passed in the morning by my old Zariba at Sanala, and halted after mid-day at a big water-hole named Diddin-ajalo. On May 30th, not quite two months previously, when we stopped at this spot, the water was in places about 6 or 7 feet deep, and the pool, which was quite full, between 300 and 400 yards long. When we arrived on July 23rd, after a hot and thirsty march, it was to find the whole place dried up, except in one small spot, where there was about a foot of liquid mud with an occasional puddle of filthy water about 6 inches deep. This shows what the evaporation must have been, and of course the pool at the bottom of our old Zariba was completely dried up. The Zariba itself had been visited since we evacuated it on the 17th

of June, all the empty cartridge cases and anything of the slightest possible value having been removed. The grave of one of our men who had been buried close to the Zariba had been opened and the body removed, *not* by animals.

On the afternoon of the 23rd we again marched, covering about twenty miles in the course of the day. On the 24th we reached Eyl Dab, where we met Captains Bruce and Merewether, who had experienced much trouble in getting the Jowari, which had, after all, arrived too late. They also brought with them a consignment of stores, of which we stood very much in need, and a mail which we were delighted to receive.

We halted during the forenoon of the following day, July 25th, and I went out shooting in the early morning. When previously at Eyl Dab, on May 29th, we had halted for half a day, and I had on that occasion also gone out to shoot, seeing oryx, geranook and dhero, but had not succeeded in getting anything; I was therefore in hopes of being more successful this time.



Soon after starting we saw some geranook a good way off, and were just preparing to go after them when we heard some foxes making a great noise in a patch of jungle some little distance to our left. Going cautiously up to the spot, a leopard was seen to jump out of a low tree and make off in the bushes without ever giving a chance of a shot; indeed, I did not see the animal at all, merely getting a glimpse of a momentary commotion in the tree, but we found his tracks on the ground clear enough. When we got to the foot of the tree, or rather big thorn bush, out of which the leopard had jumped, we found that he had killed a dhero, and had placed the body, only a small portion of which had been eaten, in a forked branch about 10 feet above the ground.

This being so close to camp, not more than a mile in a straight line, we could already see a whole army of camels coming out to graze. In ten minutes they were swarming all over the place where we had seen the leopard, thus effectually spoiling any possible chance there might have been of his return, and, as we marched that

evening, I had to give up all hopes of seeing him again. The ground, too, was as hard as iron and very dry, so tracking was hopeless; besides which the very large number of camels that were out grazing had disturbed the whole jungle for a radius of some three or four miles round camp. The meat in the tree had proved attractive to two spotted hyænas, which we found close by, and one of which I shot, as I wanted a specimen.

After this we did a long round before getting back to camp, but only saw some oryx, which were quite unapproachable, and some female geranook, at which of course I would not fire. In the afternoon we marched to Ainaba.

On the 26th we again halted during the forenoon, as there was good grazing at this spot, and our camels had been doing much hard work lately. Taking advantage of this delay, I went out in the early morning and killed a dhero not far from camp. After this we covered a lot of ground, seeing only one oryx and some geranook. There was one buck amongst the latter with fair horns, at which I tried hard to

get a shot, but was unsuccessful, the whole herd being very wild. We followed them for a long way, and I might once have got a running shot at the buck, but it was a difficult one, and I did not take it, hoping to get a better chance later, which I never did. That evening we struck camp, and proceeded towards Olassān, halting about four or five miles short of that place.

On the morning of the 27th we made a short march to the Olassān Wells, camping a little distance on the further side, and waiting till our animals had all drunk, and the whole of our water-tins were filled, as we did not expect to get any more water until we reached Burao. When we started for the afternoon's march I went to one side of the track to shoot. In a short time we came on three dibtag—one female, one young male, and one other that I could not see clearly, as the jungle was rather thick and the breeze unfavourable. They got our wind and went off along with some geranook, which had been feeding near them. I have more than once noticed that dibtag and geranook seem to go together,

as they frequent much the same sort of jungle in districts that dibtag inhabit, and I have four or five times seen them actually together. There is, however, one great difference between them, which is this—that whereas dibtag are to be found both in the jungle and on open ground, geranook are essentially bush-loving animals, and, as far as I know, are *never* found away from trees.

After this we walked a long way, seeing nothing but some geranook about a mile off down wind, and I began to fear that I would have to return to camp empty-handed, but shortly before six o'clock we sighted a female lesser kudu and fawn. They moved slowly forward, and we followed cautiously, hoping that there might be a buck close by; nor were we disappointed, for, after going a short distance further, we saw a male in some thin scrub jungle about 300 yards off. After a fairly easy stalk we got within about 150 yards, but he was standing behind a small bush, which I feared might turn the bullet. I had to take the shot at once, however, as the



sun was rapidly sinking and the light getting worse every second. The cartridge missed fire! At the next trial it went off all right, and the bullet struck the kudu fairly behind the left shoulder. He gave a few bounds to one side, and was dead before we got up, shot through the heart. We then saw a second male; he stood for a second and then made off. I might have had a running shot at him about 120 yards distant, moving through the bushes, but I refrained from firing as the light was very bad, the sun having now set, and if I had fired I would probably only have wounded him. We followed his tracks for about five minutes, and then, seeing that he had gone clean away, we returned to cut up the kudu I had shot. Its horns measured 21¾ inches straight and 28⅜ inches along the curve; circumference at base, 6⅞ inches; tip to tip, 11¾ inches.

It was almost dark by the time we got fairly started on our way, and we either overshot the tracks in the dark or passed just in front of the caravan, as it took us over three hours to find

the camp, we having gone much too far to the south, whence we had to retrace our steps. Of course we did not know where the halting-place would be; all we could tell was the general direction, and we might have had serious trouble in finding the camp that night had we not sighted the fires.

Next morning we started shortly after six, and as soon as the column was fairly under way, I went to the left of the line of march to look for game. Very soon after turning aside we saw a female dibtag, and a short distance further on four geranook does. The latter were grazing in some open bush just at the foot of a low hill, and thinking there might be a male with them, though not in sight, we went very quietly forward for about a quarter of a mile, when we saw another close to the edge of the jungle. A look through the glasses showed us that he was a male with a nice pair of horns, and, after an easy stalk, both my Shikari and I got within 150 yards or so of him. I had another miss-fire, having apparently got a bad lot of



cartridges, but I had several times noticed that these miss-fires almost invariably exploded the second time. So I simply raised the knob and drew back the bolt a short way to cock the rifle, as this makes far less noise than drawing back the whole action far enough, and with sufficient force, to eject the cartridge. On this occasion the miss-fire was actually to my advantage, as the geranook was not at first properly broadside to me, and I had to take him kneeling so as to see clearly over the bush on which he was feeding. By the time I was ready to fire again he had stepped out into the open, clear of the bush, and was now standing fairly broadside on. I was also able to fire from the sitting position, which I infinitely prefer to the kneeling. The geranook simply sacrificed himself, as I got him behind the shoulder. He ran on for about 50 yards and then dropped. His horns measured 13⅞ inches in length, girth at base 5 inches, tip to tip 5⅝ inches. I was well pleased to get him, as these measurements were considerably larger than those of any

geranook I had previously shot. We then went on and reached the midday halt at about half-past ten, seeing on the way four more geranook, all females, and five awal (Sœmmerring's gazelle). One of the latter was a male, but as his horns were not particularly large I did not fire at him.

As I have previously mentioned how effective I found the ·275 Mauser-Rigby, especially with soft-nosed split bullets, I think it is only fair to Messrs. Rigby, from whom I bought the rifle, to mention that the cartridges I used when in Somaliland in 1901 were not purchased from them. I do not think that any fault lay in the rifle, as the striker and mainspring were most carefully examined by myself, and also by the European Armourer-Sergeant who accompanied the force, and were found to be in perfect order.

In the afternoon I again tried my luck on the left of the line of march, as there seemed to be a good deal of game in this district. I knew also that this good shooting country could not extend much further, as we were



now close to Bair and expected to reach Burao next day, July 29th, and after our arrival at the latter place there would scarcely be any time for sport. I was, however, unsuccessful, seeing only two female geranook, two awal, and two dhero, none of which carried anything remarkable in the way of a head.

Shortly after six in the evening we turned to the right to look for the tracks of the caravan, which we intended to follow till we came to where the column had halted for the night. About half-past six we hit off the spoor, along which we proceeded. After going for about two hours without seeing any signs of the camp, I began to think that they must have made a very long march, as we had not gone far to the left when shooting, and had been going very fast since we found the trail. There was no possibility of our having got on the spoor of any Karias which had lately been on the move, because of the large number of tracks and their freshness, all the Karias in that neighbourhood having left some time since,

besides which there were several donkey tracks mixed up with the camels' footprints. Throughout the whole Expedition we had taken twenty odd donkeys along with us, partly as an experiment to see how they would stand the marching, and partly in order to have some faster-moving animals than camels on which to carry ammunition. They marched well, but on the whole were more trouble than they were worth, as they were constantly throwing their loads and then bolting—a proceeding which gave the rear guard no reason to bless the patient ass—rather the reverse.

On this occasion these donkey-tracks served to show that we were on the right trail, and when we lost the spoor a short distance ahead on some stony ground the presence of these diminutive hoof-marks again showed us that we had made no mistake when we hit off the tracks a little further on. The only thing that still puzzled me was the small number of horses' hoof-prints, which fact, strangely enough, did not seem to strike my



Shikari, fine tracker though he was; but our time was fully taken up keeping the trail on the hard ground and in the semi-darkness. At last, about a quarter past nine, we heard the welcome and indescribable sound of camels, and saw the camp-fires. It was not, however, the camp of the main column I had reached, but that of Lieutenant Byrne, who had been sent on ahead with all the female camels, and all the loading camels not actually engaged in carrying baggage or water; he had also taken the donkeys with him, of which fact I was not aware. When we turned to the left to look for the caravan tracks, it was his spoor that we hit off, the tracks of the main column being parallel to, and about a quarter of a mile on the further side of Byrne's trail. The routes of the two parties had diverged further on, so that that night we halted about six miles apart. This also explained how it was that we had seen so few horse-tracks, Byrne having only about six in all with him, and as he had left us the previous day, and been marching ahead of us ever

since, he had naturally got further on that night; hence my surprise at the long distance we had to go before reaching camp.

I immediately wrote a note to Colonel Swayne, to say where I was and how I had got there. We got a spearman to start with it soon after midnight, and it was received next morning at dawn, just as the main column was about to move off.

I had, of course, no food or bedding with me, and Byrne had finished his dinner and was about to turn in when I arrived, but he most kindly got me some food and a comfortable shake-down, on which I slept the sleep of the just till daybreak.

All the she-camels and their young had started some two hours previously, so it did not take long to get the remainder off, and as we were now within about sixteen miles of Burao we determined to let them go straight in, merely halting ourselves for a couple of hours during the heat of the day, should we feel inclined to do so. As the camels were not in my charge, and as it was also no use

my attempting to join the main column, I now had the whole day to myself, provided I got to Burao that evening. I therefore determined to see if I could not get another geranook or dibtag before arriving there.

Next day I again went to the left, and in about an hour sighted some three or four geranook, one of which was a male with a fair head. The stalk was somewhat difficult owing to the open nature of the jungle, and we could not get nearer than about 200 yards, from which distance I fired. The geranook at once bolted to the left, but by running hard we managed to cut them off, and I got another chance at 300 yards, the buck luckily standing clear of the does. The second shot got him, but he went about 40 yards before he fell. His horns were not so long as those I had got the previous day, measuring only 12¾ inches in length, but they were slightly thicker, being 5¼ inches round the base.

After this we went on for some time, seeing only one lot of geranook which we

could not get near. Shortly before eleven we came on still another lot, and with them were two dibtag. I think one of the latter was a male, but am not sure, as they were all very wild and hard to approach, there being a couple of Karias with camels and sheep close by, which had much disturbed the ground. After following this mixed lot of geranook and dibtag some distance, without ever getting a chance at either, we at length managed to get up within about 300 yards. It was quite impossible to get any nearer, as they were just on the point of moving off again, so I tried a shot at a geranook, which was the only animal we could clearly make out to be a male. I was able to lie down, so was perfectly steady, but I had to fire so that the bullet should pass between two branches of a tree, about half-way between me and the buck. These two branches were very close together, and of course I managed to put the bullet into one of them! It was a difficult shot, as there was just room and no more to shoot through the space,



Photo. by Author.

Trophies of Officers—Somali water vessels in foreground.

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but if I had succeeded in negotiating this place I think I would have got the geranook all right, as his shoulders showed up between the two branches like a picture in a frame. These picture shots have always a great fascination for me, it being a very pretty bit of shooting if it comes off, while at the same time it nearly always means either a clean kill or a miss.

We followed the herd for some distance further, but they were now thoroughly alarmed and had gone right away. We saw nothing more, and, after resting about two hours in the middle of the day, reached Burao about half-past four in the afternoon.

Byrne had already arrived, and Colonel Swayne with the rest of the force got in shortly after five, and the Expedition was finished.

We left Burao on May 22nd, and returned to the same place on July 29th, just sixty-nine days after starting. During this time, I had marched 852 miles, an average of only 12½ miles per day, but this included our long

halt at Sanala from May 31st till June 17th, during which period the column under Colonel Swayne had covered many miles, in the pursuit of the Mullah, which of course brought up their total to nearly if not quite 1,200 miles. Since July 5th I had marched 448 miles in twenty-three consecutive days (omitting one day's halt on the 21st at Tiffafli). This gives an average of 19½ miles per day.

In the course of ten weeks we had defeated the Mullah in three fights on the 2nd and 3rd of June and on the 17th of July, and he had been twice chased out of British territory; Colonel Swayne had also pursued him through one whole night, killing many of his followers, and in addition to this the Dolbahanta tribes who had sided with him had been severely punished. Not bad work for just over two months with raw Levies!



CHAPTER XIII

Uncertainty as to what was to be done with Levy on conclusion of Expedition—Ordered to Sheikh—Sport on the way—Temporary arrangements as to Levy—Somali "camel-fever"—Shooting near Sheikh—Arrangements as to news of kudu—Get news—Shoot a bull—Return to Burao—Shoot a wart hog—Arrive at Burao—Out of luck shooting—Settling up with Levy—Unpleasant weather—Return to Sheikh—Take over command of Levy—Arrangements—Unsuccessful day after kudu—Return to Burao—Good sport near Burao—Defensive measures for strengthening the post—Measures taken to obtain news of the Mullah.

BEFORE our arrival at Burao we had heard all sorts of rumours as to what was to be done with the Levy, but nothing for certain as to whether it was to be disbanded wholly or in part, and whether the Foreign Office did or did not intend to raise a permanent force in Somaliland, making the trained men of the Levy the nucleus. By July 29th no definite instructions had been received,

either on this subject or as to the distribution to the men of gratuities in the shape of captured camels, &c., so Colonel Swayne proceeded that night to Sheikh, about forty miles to the north, where he had to meet the Consul-General, Colonel Hayes Sadler, to settle many matters, including the issue of "Batta" camels, and what was to be done in the matter of retaining men until definite orders were received as to the intentions of the Home Government. All the mounted troops, the reserve company, and the transport and spearmen also went, leaving only the two Infantry Corps at Burao. I myself also received orders to proceed to Sheikh, and to return when a definite arrangement had been arrived at. Accordingly I left Burao on the morning of July 31st and reached my destination the next evening.

There is but little game to be found near the Burao-Sheikh road, and even this little had been a good deal disturbed for some time past by men and caravans continually going to and fro, a lot of people having passed on the two preceding days. The game consists of dhero,



wart hog, and an occasional geranook, but much depends on the grazing to be found near the route, and at this time there was very little; there are also a few geranook near Burao, but, as might be expected, they are decidedly shy. On July 31st I got a shot at one of these facing me at about 150 yards, but missed, for which I was sorry, as he was a male with a nice pair of horns. After this I saw nothing except an occasional dhero, till close to Sheikh, where I shot an awl, the only one we had seen on the road. There was a certain amount of green grass near this place, but of course it had brought swarms of Karias, which had driven away most of the game from the neighbourhood. Still I had hopes of getting a greater kudu before leaving again for Burao, as the hills round Sheikh have always held a fair number of these magnificent antelopes.

I was most hospitably received by the Consul-General, and was informed that the Foreign Office had not yet sent any definite orders as to the formation of a permanent

force in the Protectorate, but that a proposed scheme had been drawn up and sent home. Meantime it was decided to keep 500 Infantry of the Levy up country, and an extra company to garrison Berbera. Besides this the Camel Corps and some of the Mounted Infantry were to be retained pending orders. Meanwhile all arrangements were to be regarded merely as temporary measures until definite orders were received from home. I was also told that this state of uncertainty would probably be settled in about six weeks or two months. Perhaps it is scarcely necessary to add that on the 1st of January, 1902, no definite orders had yet been issued. Certain officers were to be allowed to proceed home, or to rejoin their regiments at once, and a paper was sent round to all officers to ascertain the names of those who were willing to volunteer for service in the African Protectorate under the Foreign Office, for a period of three years.

After some discussion the following instructions were issued as to the Levy. Any men

who wished to resign were to be allowed to do so, provided that 500 Infantry, exclusive of the company at Berbera, were retained. In the event of too many wishing to leave, lots were to be drawn as to who were to be allowed to go, and who would have to remain until the wishes of the home Government were made known. Every Sepoy was to receive a gratuity of two camels besides his pay, and those who volunteered to stop on were to be given an extra camel; other ranks were allotted camels in proportion. Any men who wished to take camels in lieu of pay were allowed to do so, their value being reckoned at 25 rupees each, so as to give those wishing to purchase a good investment for their money. This indulgence had to be withdrawn before all the companies had been settled with, owing to the large number of men who took camels, the low price tempting them. To the nearest relatives of every man killed in action fifteen camels were given, and those who had been wounded received compensation up to seven, according to the nature of their wounds. About half the



number of men remaining were allowed to proceed on furlough for six weeks, the remainder going on leave when the first lot returned.

These arrangements worked out satisfactorily in the end, and were, I think, very fair to every one concerned, but only an individual who has had practical experience of the Somali, when camels are in question, can form any idea of the innumerable and apparently interminable disputes which arose over their actual distribution. Of course every man wished to secure the best animals for himself, and also tried to get every camel he possibly could by fair means or foul; consequently pretty strong measures had to be taken to preserve order. I think this business gave me in some ways a better insight into the Somali character than anything else could possibly have done. Never before had I the faintest conception of what he will do for camels. I have read of the gold-fever and the excitement and consequent scenes following the discovery of new diggings, but I think that, in its way,



the Somali "camel-fever" must run that close.

During the first few days after my arrival at Sheikh I had a considerable amount to do, one way and another, but I made careful inquiries about the chances of getting a greater kudu. From all I could gather there certainly was a fair number in the vicinity, but they had been a good deal disturbed, and there were many Karias about, even amongst the hills. I went out three or four times in the mornings and evenings, but saw nothing except a couple of Alicout (Klipspringers), and though we got on the fresh tracks of a kudu one forenoon, I failed to get a shot, the bull going into the Reserve.

On August 9th I sent out my Shikari, Ali Borali, with instructions to go round to the various Karias on or near the ground where kudu were to be found, and to tell the Karia men that if any of them saw a *male* kudu, no matter of what size, they were to come at once and let me know. If on this information I saw any bull at all I would make the man who



brought me the news a present, whether I got a shot or not; while if I killed one I would of course give an increased reward. This was, I considered, the best course I could adopt, there being so much ground that I could never have examined it properly without being out all day and every day; whereas by enlisting the services of these people a very large extent of good ground was searched daily for me by men who knew where the game was likely to be found. I do not think that kudu, any more than several other species of hill game, seem to be very much disturbed by cattle grazing near them, as they have of course been accustomed to it for generations. It certainly does not make them leave the ground, provided, of course, that an unusually large number of Karias are not about, and that the men herding cattle do not molest them.

On this occasion my action succeeded admirably, even before I expected it to have any effect.

Ali Borali had gone out at dawn, and I did not expect any news that day, as I considered



that it would take him nearly till dark to go round the different Karias and explain what was wanted, more especially as during the daytime all the cowherds would be out on the hillsides with their charges, and it would require a good while to visit them all. He was also to explain that, in the event of a kudu bull being sighted, only one man was to come with the news, while another remained to watch the animal, taking care of course to keep himself well hidden. The wisdom of this precaution will be seen later on.

About half-past one, before my Shikari had returned, a man came in to say he had seen a good bull, and that another man had remained to watch. I much regretted that Ali Borali was still absent, as of course these men could not talk any Hindustani, and I anticipated considerable difficulty when once we arrived at the spot where the game had been seen, as I could not talk Somali, and the slightest mistake as to the exact position of the kudu might easily lose me the shot. However there was no help for it, and I started at once, taking

with me my "boy," who, though not a Shikari, was, like most Somalis, a fine walker, and could also talk both Hindustani and English fairly well. Before we reached the hill where the kudu had been seen Ali Borali met us, which greatly simplified matters, and shortly after 3 p.m. we arrived near the very spot, but the bull had moved on. Almost at once we noticed the man who had been left to watch, and very well had he performed his task, keeping out of sight amongst some bushes on the hillside facing that on which the kudu was. He then made signs to us to make a considerable *détour* and meet him at a spot below where we stood. This we did, and ascertained from him almost the exact spot where he had marked the bull down, which was on the same hillside as that on which we were then standing, and a few hundred yards ahead. The ground was here cut up by ravines running down the slope from left to right, and where the kudu had last been seen there was a rather thick growth of bushes; between us and this spot the hillside was



rough and broken, being covered with loose stones, but comparatively open.

We began the stalk at once, taking advantage of the broken ground when crossing the open space. A small dip lay between us and the scrub, and as we were crossing this we saw the kudu for a moment, but there were far too many bushes between him and us for a shot, and in a second he disappeared—going slowly forward at a walk and evidently not at all alarmed. On getting up the other side of the dip we saw him again, nearly broadside on and about 160 yards distant, across another small ravine. I fired at once—standing—as I could not see to shoot kneeling. We heard the bullet tell loudly, and the bull disappeared in the bushes before I could get in another shot. When we reached the spot where he had been standing there was a fair amount of blood on his spoor, which led downhill. After going a short way the blood increased, a good sign, especially as the tracks still led downhill; a little further on we put him up, but the jungle was here so thick that we never even

saw him. After this he went right to the bottom of the hill and crossed the nullah, going into some thick stuff on the other side. We now rested him for a few minutes, hoping he would stop and possibly lie down, but it was now well on in the afternoon and we could not halt as long as I would have liked. However, even this short delay did good, as on taking up the tracks we again heard him crash away—still without giving me even a glimpse of his body—almost as soon as we had crossed the nullah.

Another 200 yards or so of this thick scrub and I sighted him at last, standing with his hind-quarters towards me, about 80 yards off. I fired at once and he disappeared, but in another 150 yards I saw him again, and getting in a hurried shot hit him in the shoulder, though rather low down. He was nearly done now, as, after going about another 100 yards he again stood, when I got close up and put in a shot behind the shoulder which dropped him on the spot. He really was a big bull, very heavy, but old and scarred all

over. His body skin was nearly destitute of hair, but he had a fine beard. His horns measured 48$\frac{11}{16}$ inches along the curve, 37 inches straight, circumference at base 9$\frac{15}{16}$ inches, tip to tip 30$\frac{3}{4}$ inches. These measurements are not bad for Somaliland, where the greater kudu does not appear to grow horns as long as those found in Central and South Africa.

I found that my first shot had gone rather low, hitting him in the stomach, but the bullet had expanded well and done a considerable amount of damage to the intestines; otherwise I fear we might have lost him, as animals hit through the belly often travel for miles, escaping at the time, only to die a lingering death afterwards. My second shot, fired at his hindquarters, had hit him about 2 inches below and to the right of the root of his tail, and had penetrated into his vitals. This practically finished him, as he did not go far after receiving it, and I was enabled shortly afterwards to get close up and give him the two finishing shots behind the shoulder. On the whole I

think we were lucky to get him, taking into consideration the thickness of the jungle and that I had to fire every one of the four shots at him from the standing position, and that the first bullet hit him so low.

It was late when we reached Sheikh, having a good load to carry, what with the head and head skin of the kudu and my rifle, cartridges, water-bottle, and camera. The first two items were a heavy weight in themselves, and we had a very steep hill to ascend immediately above where we had killed the kudu. There was a lot of rain hanging about, though not a drop fell, and as not a breath of wind was stirring, it was terribly hot and sultry in the valleys and nearly as bad on the hilltops. I was wearing rather a thick flannel shirt that day, consequently on arriving in camp I was nearly as wet as if I had fallen into a river.

I heard of no more kudu during the next three days, and as the temporary arrangements for the Levy had by now been completed, I left Sheikh on the evening of the 13th of August on my return to Burao. The next



day I shot a wart hog. He was not very big, but he was the first I had seen with even a respectable pair of tushes. We were crossing a flat, open space of ground, when he suddenly rushed out from a hole in the earth about 60 yards to our right, and went away across the plain as hard as he could. During the first 50 yards of his flight he jinked from side to side almost every second, and I missed him with my first shot, but he afterwards steadied down to an even gallop, turning slightly to his right, which enabled me to kill him with my second shot. The Mauser bullet caught him rather far back on the right side and passed obliquely forward, being found in the muscles on the left side of the neck. On receiving this shot he ran about 100 yards and then fell dead. I think I have seen it stated in some book that wart hogs do not go to earth, but here was proof positive that they do. I do not imagine they ever dig a hole for themselves, though very possibly their rooting propensities may cause them to enlarge an otherwise small hole to suit their own requirements.

I fired at nothing else that day, though I saw several lots of dhero, but there were no good heads amongst them. During the afternoon I only saw one geranook, a female.

Next day, August 15th, I arrived at Burao at about 10 a.m., having experienced one of those mornings when everything seems to go wrong and nothing right. We made a considerable *détour* to the west of the line of march, but saw nothing for nearly two hours. We then came on some dhero, one of which, a male with fair horns, I succeeded in missing, and, though we followed for some distance, I never got near him again. A short way further on we saw four geránook, one male and three females. We got close to them in the jungle, but I could not get a shot before they made off. We followed for some considerable distance, putting them up three times in all, without even getting a chance. We then left them, as it was clear from their tracks that all four were thoroughly alarmed, and were going straight away from us. After this we saw a rattel, or badger, an animal that is



fairly widely distributed in Somaliland, but not very often met with. He was in some thick grass about 100 yards from me when I fired. I do not think I touched him, as he presented a very small mark, but he could not make out where the shot came from, and came past us about 60 yards off. I knocked him over with my second shot, but he picked himself up and got down a hole among the roots of a thick bush before we could get up—nor could we dislodge him, the hole being a deep one. I was disappointed at this, as the rattel differs considerably from the British badger, and I was anxious to secure a specimen.

I remained at Burao during the next fortnight settling up with the companies under my command. This was not altogether an easy or pleasant task, continual wrangles occurring on the subject of camels, but it was finished at last, and all the men either discharged, sent on furlough, or retained for temporary service till orders should be received from the Foreign Office. In spite of grumbling and imagined grievances they seemed well satisfied, and no

difficulty was experienced in getting a sufficient number to remain on.

The weather during this time was very disagreeable, being still unpleasantly hot, while all day the *Haga* wind blew with great violence, simply smothering us with dust and sand. To relieve the monotony of life in a standing camp I went out on three evenings in the vicinity of the Zariba, but did not get a single shot, the very few geranook I saw being all very wild.

Towards the end of August I again received orders to go to Sheikh, and started from Burao on the evening of the 27th, arriving shortly before noon on the 29th. I got very little sport on the march, shooting only one dik dik with the rifle on the 27th. Everything was dried up, and what little game I saw was quite unapproachable. I followed a geranook some way on the 28th, and might have got a fair chance at him, but he circled back towards the road and was disturbed by some men on their way to Burao.

On arrival at Sheikh I found that Colonel

Swayne was going home shortly, and that I was to take over from him the command of the Levy. I also heard of the new scheme that was then being prepared at the Foreign Office, by which it was intended to unite all the different African Protectorate regiments into one force, to be called "The King's African Rifles," the officers of which were to be interchangeable to the various battalions, and each Protectorate regiment (or battalion) to be liable for general service in Africa.

As the Consul-General and Colonel Swayne were going home at the same time, there was a good deal to discuss and settle. Things were to continue as previously arranged, the Infantry remaining at Burao, which was to be made as secure against attack as possible. Steps were to be taken to gain information as to the Mullah's whereabouts and movements, but no fresh operations were to be undertaken against him unless he made a sudden descent on the Isaak tribes in the vicinity of Burao, in which case these tribes were to be protected. This, however, was hardly expected after the severe

lesson he had received, and the general instructions were that things were to be kept as quiet as possible, the force left at Burao being deemed sufficient to deter the Mullah from coming far north.

During the few days I remained at Sheikh on this occasion I had only one chance of shooting. This was on August 31st, when at about 10 a.m. I received news of four kudu bulls having been seen on the hills a short way beyond where I had already killed one on the 9th. I started at about 10.30, and shortly after noon reached the spot where they had been seen, and where two men had remained to watch. The kudu were on the side of a high and rather thickly wooded hill, at the bottom of which ran a broad, dry nullah. Proceeding up this we soon sighted four bulls and two cows moving through the jungle some way above us. Keeping well out of sight among some trees on the further side of the nullah, I soon got a good view of them through my telescope. None seemed to have a head any better than, if as good as, the specimen I had



[*Photo. by Author.*

Shikari (Ali Borali) with Baira Antelope.

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already shot, but it was hard to be certain at that distance. As they were on the move during the heat of the day, it looked as if they had been disturbed by something, so we resolved to give them time to settle down again, fearing that if we went on at once they might go clean away. We accordingly remained where we were for about an hour, watching the hillside carefully.

The six we had seen soon disappeared over a ridge to our left, but before the hour's grace was over two bulls and one cow came back along the hillside and went away to our right. After giving them a little law my Shikari and I went up to where they had passed and found their tracks. These we followed some way, but were disgusted to hear some man shouting at the pitch of his voice in the exact direction they had taken. Judging that it would be useless to follow them any further, we retraced our steps to where we had taken up their tracks, and where I had left some men to watch the hillside in case any other kudu should come in sight. They reported having

seen nothing, so I was in hopes that the rest might still be undisturbed. In a short time the wretch we had heard shouting turned up, and, when questioned, coolly admitted having seen the kudu and having shouted! I then asked him if he thought that they would die of fright on hearing his voice, but the inane fool only grinned and said it was his people's custom to do so when game was sighted! Such are the trials that must be put up with when big game shooting, but surely they are enough, on occasions, to try the temper of every saint in the calendar.

We then took up the spoor of the others, and this led us some way along the hillside, which was very much broken up with ravines and watercourses, and covered with thick jungle. After about an hour's going we heard some heavy animals move away in front of us, but could see nothing. A short distance further on I saw some kudu cows, and a few seconds later a bull came in sight and stood broadside on about 80 yards off. I covered him with the rifle, but took it down again



without firing, as I could not see his horns, and he appeared to me, from the colour of his body (a dark brown instead of almost a slatey blue), to be a young animal. All the kudu then rushed down to the bottom of the slope, across the nullah, and up the opposite hill. Following at once, we saw them before getting half-way to the top. They were going very slowly, and as they filed across an open space I got the telescope on them. There were two bulls, one a very small one indeed, and the other with horns not worth taking, so I was extremely glad I had not fired. As it was now getting late, we left them and returned to Sheikh.

Having received all my instructions, and said goodbye to Colonel Swayne and the Consul-General, both of whom started for Berbera *en route* to London during the first week in September, I left for Burao on Sept. 7th. The game along the route was as wild as ever, and, though I saw a certain number of geranook and dhero, I did not get a shot till the morning of the 9th, the day I reached my destination,

when, curiously enough, on very nearly the same ground on which I had, on August 15th, unsuccessfully pursued dhero, geranook, and badger, I again found the same species of animals, and this time I succeeded in bagging all three.

I began with the geranook; getting on his tracks soon after leaving camp, we followed a long way without being able to get a shot, though we saw him once or twice, and had almost given him up when we suddenly came on a badger about 70 yards off. As I had practically lost all hopes of bagging the geranook, I aimed at the former, but, luckily for me, the cartridge missed fire. The badger then disappeared behind a bush, and on my shifting my position to get another chance at him we suddenly saw the geranook about 140 yards off. He had not made us out, and I was able to get a shot at him while still standing on the other side of a small tree. The bullet hit rather low, and he dashed off, but we found him lying down and unable to move about 200 yards further on. His horns were the best



pair I had yet got, measuring $13\frac{15}{16}$ inches along the curve, and $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches in circumference at the base.

About an hour later we came on two more badgers, both of which I managed to knock over with the rifle while they were running through the bushes about 70 yards off. One fell at once, but the other picked himself up and got under a small tree, where I finished him off with a charge of shot, fearing to spoil his skin. The dhero, which I shot about noon, was the only buck in a fairly large herd.

On arrival at Burao I found that the process of strengthening the camp had already been begun. The soil was far too sandy to admit of a deep ditch being dug, as was at first intended; the sides would quickly have fallen in, while the sandstorms alone would have necessitated constant clearing. Instead of digging a ditch we built a stockade, which was made by placing two rows of stout sticks about 3 feet apart, and building up the space between with stones, the interstices of which were filled with mud and brushwood broken up small, water

being constantly poured over the whole while in the course of construction, so as to settle the earth and small brushwood well into their places, thus making a sort of mortar. On the top of the stones came a layer of earth, a row of sand-bags being placed on the top of the whole, thus bringing the stockade up to about 4 ft. 6 in. in height, and affording good head cover. Outside this stockade were two thorn fences, the inner one about 12 and the outer about 20 yards broad, both being low enough not to interfere with the fire from the stockade; the whole was thickly entangled with barbed wire. The stockade was run right round the camp, care being taken to place traverses where it was liable to be enfiladed, while two special places were made for the Maxim guns. Such a stockade is almost indestructible, as it is impossible to burn it, while it is proof against anything except heavy artillery fire. They were much used on the West Coast of Africa, and the construction of this one was carried out under the superintendence of Lieutenant Dixon, West India Regiment, who had served

with the Expedition for the relief of Coomassie.

Head cover, composed of sand-bags, was also constructed wherever the inside of the camp was at all exposed, and all the surrounding jungle was cut down for a clear 800 yards in front of the Zariba.

The rear, or north side, was protected by a sheer bank about 30 feet high, below which was the broad bed of the river, which here makes a sweep to the eastwards, leaving a clear space about 350 yards broad, in the middle of which are the Burao wells, all completely exposed to the fire from the Zariba. Thus the garrison held the wells absolutely in their power, and could easily have kept the whole countryside without water as long as they pleased. In fact, by further strengthening a naturally strong position, we succeeded in making Burao into a really formidable post.

I now began to make inquiries as to the Mullah, and sent down men into the nearer parts of the Dolbahanta district to try and find

out as much about him as possible. There were all sorts of rumours about his movements, and the numbers of his followers, which it is quite unnecessary to enumerate here, but, after sifting the various reports as far as possible, the truth seemed to be that he had returned into the southern portion of the Dolbahanta country, but was coming about as far north again as Sanala. It was very hard to arrive even at an approximate estimate of the number of his followers, but the general opinion seemed to be that he had not very many; his horses also were said to be somewhat few and in bad condition.



CHAPTER XIV

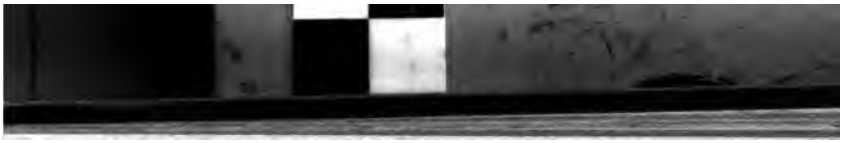
Go to Wagger Mountain to shoot—Sport *en route*—Lose a good wart hog—Arrive at Gedais—Hear of kudu further west—Move there—Unsuccessful quest—Shoot a klipspringer—Move to Ragger Pass—See kudu—Shoot another klipspringer—Get another greater kudu—Go to look for baira antelope—Secure two specimens—Description of baira—Start back for Burao—Shoot a good geranook—See six hunting leopards—Arrive at Burao—Game shot on trip—Remarks on stock of kudu and baira.

THE stockade was built and the rest of the defences finished by the end of September. Till then I was kept fairly busy, more especially as Captain Sharp, I am sorry to say, was laid up at Sheikh with a sharp attack of fever, but he had recovered sufficiently to come to Burao by the 30th.

I now determined to go for a few days' Shikar to the Wagger Mountain, which stands about two days' march due north of Burao.

This hill was reported to be full of greater kudu, and, what was more, I knew that very few European sportsmen had ever gone there, and that none had visited it for at least three years. I also heard that near this place was to be found the baira antelope, a small animal said to be somewhat like a klipspringer, but rather larger and of a different colour, and not a frequenter of such rocky ground. I was eventually successful in securing two specimens of this antelope, and found the foregoing description true enough, as far as its habits, colour, &c., were concerned, but I could not trace any resemblance to the klipspringer (or alicout) the horns of the baira being of quite a different shape, and the coats of the two animals entirely distinct.

Leaving Burao early on the morning of the 5th of October, we marched northwards all day without seeing anything except one small geranook, though we passed through a bit of jungle that was said to be a well-known place for these animals. Very little rain had fallen anywhere in this part of the country,



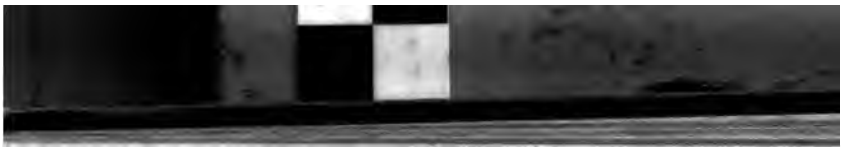
and the effects were everywhere apparent—no grass, and the trees with very few leaves on their branches. The next morning I was more successful, securing two dhero, both with good heads; we saw some awal as well, but there were none with horns sufficiently good to tempt me to fire. I was, however, unfortunate enough to wound and lose an oryx before reaching the midday halt. He gave me a difficult chance, galloping through the jungle, and on being hit he went off due south, the very opposite point to that for which we were making. We followed him for some distance, till we came to the top of a small hill, whence we could see a good way in the direction he had taken, and, as he was then nowhere visible, I was reluctantly compelled to leave him.

In the afternoon I lost a really good wart hog in a most annoying fashion.

Shortly after starting we came across two sounders; the first lot were all small, but in the second was a boar with the best tushes I had yet seen. He stood not more than



100 yards from me, broadside on and giving me a splendid chance. Just as I was on the point of firing, two wretched "squeakers" ran up between us, thus necessitating my waiting till they moved. When they did the boar moved also, trotting off behind a bush, and when he again came into the open he was about 130 yards off and going at a fast trot. I hit him with the first shot, but not sufficiently hard to stop him. However, the second at about 180 yards was better placed, nearly knocking him over. He then went on a short way, and stood about 200 yards from me, very sick. He was quite clear of bushes, and I was able to lie down and take a steady aim, but he again moved, going behind a bush, which necessitated my getting up and shifting into a different position. The boar was walking very slowly, and I have not the slightest doubt that I would have been able to finish him off with ease, had not what turned out to be a most unfortunate interruption occurred. All of a sudden, out of the bushes a short distance beyond the



wart hog, rushed a male kudu. We could distinctly see his horns, which were short, but in the momentary view we had of him it was not possible to say for certain whether he was a greater or a lesser kudu. Anyway, it was well worth while trying to ascertain, so, not knowing the ground and never thinking that the boar could go far, we proceeded to follow up the kudu. After going about a quarter of a mile we saw him clearly on the open side of a small hill, when it was at once apparent that he was a greater kudu with indifferent horns. We accordingly left him and went back to look for the wounded wart hog, but found that he had managed to get into some very dense stuff through which we could not even force our way, and which I never knew existed in that place. We never saw him again, though we did our best to find him.

That night we halted at Gedais, close to Wagger Mountain, and the next morning I sent out men in different directions to look for tracks of kudu. They returned during the

afternoon and evening, and reported having come on fresh signs, some distance to the westward; nothing was seen on the east end of the hill, near where we were encamped. The next morning we moved to the westward, my Shikari and I making a long *détour* through the hills, finding some fairly fresh tracks, but seeing only one female.

On arrival in camp shortly after midday we found two men had arrived from a Karia right up in the mountain, with news of kudu. I started for this place about 2 p.m., taking only a small tent, and such things as could be carried on a couple of lightly loaded camels over the very rough ground that had to be traversed to reach this Karia. Arriving there about four, we ascended a steep hill, and just before dark sighted a kudu bull at the edge of a dense patch of bush. After a good look with the glasses I decided that he was not worth shooting, much to the surprise, and, I fancy, disgust of our guides, who had been anticipating a big gorge on meat.



The next morning I sent men out early in several directions to look for kudu, and if possible to mark one down—the same arrangement, in fact, that I had made at Sheikh. Shortly after 12 noon one of them came in to say that they had seen a good bull. Starting at once, we came, in a little over a mile, to where another man who had remained to watch pointed out the kudu feeding on an opposite hill. He was moving about among some low trees, and although it did not require a long stalk to get to where he was, the whole ground was covered with loose stones and thorn bushes, which rendered it no easy matter to get within shot without alarming him. We managed to creep up fairly close, but, the jungle being thick, we could not see the bull till he bolted with a rush, when I got a momentary glimpse of him, about 60 yards from me, just as he dipped over the brow of the hill behind a bush, on the other side of which he disappeared in a second. I could not even form a proper estimate of his

horns, but from what I did see they seemed to be about the same size as those of the bull I had shot at Sheikh—slightly smaller, if anything, and with not so wide a spread. We followed him for a long distance over bad ground, but he entirely disappeared. He might possibly have stopped in one thickly wooded ravine about a couple of miles from where we put him up, but unluckily there was a Karia close by and some men were herding cattle on the hillside, so he went straight on. I omitted to mention that, just as we were starting on the stalk, two cows joined the bull. They had been feeding close by, and of course made it a much more difficult task to get near unseen or unheard. Before we got back to camp that evening a heavy thunderstorm, accompanied by a tremendous shower of rain and *hail*, descended on us for over an hour, drenching us to the skin and nearly flooding my tent.

For the next two days we went after that bull unsuccessfully. The following morning,

October 10th, we found he had come back to near where we had seen him the previous afternoon, and eventually his tracks led into a dense patch of jungle at the summit of a flat-topped hill. We tried to drive him out of this, but never saw him, and we got a second soaking from another thunder- and hail-storm which burst over us at just about the same hour as on the previous evening. This storm was even more violent and of longer duration than the first.

On the 11th we tracked him a long way, nearly back to our permanent camp, but the spoor led down wind and through rather thick jungle. We once got a glimpse of his horns as he dashed away, and that was all. This second sight of him tended to confirm me in my previous opinion that his head was slightly inferior to that of the specimen I had already secured.

As we had now driven this bull from the neighbourhood of our camp, and as the Karia men had told us from the first that they had only seen one kudu with a big

head, I determined to move still further westward the next day.

We accordingly struck our tents early next morning, the camels going straight back to the permanent camp, while I went with my Shikari to try and get a klipspringer at a place where they were said to be often seen. Here we found three, two of which made off before I could make out which was the male. Luckily the third was a little behind the others, and he stood for a few seconds on a rock about 130 yards distant. On my firing he went off apparently untouched, but we found him dead about 200 yards further on. How such a small animal ever got so far is a mystery to me, as half his inside had been blown out by the soft-nosed split Mauser bullet.

We reached the permanent camp shortly after ten, and in the afternoon marched about seven miles further to the west, encamping that evening near the top of Ragger Pass. Here we found fresh tracks of kudu near a pool of water in a steep glen; this made me



refrain from firing at another klipspringer which gave me an easy chance, as I did not wish to run the risk of disturbing, near sunset, what was evidently a favourite drinking-place of larger game.

The next morning I started at daybreak, and had a long day over certainly the worst walking I have ever seen in Somaliland. The going was steep, and we were ascending and descending hills all day; the ground was covered with loose stones which kept continually falling away from under foot, making far too much noise. There was no place really *bad*, in a Himalayan sense, but there were several spots where a fall would have been decidedly dangerous. We had constantly to force our way through thick scrub and thorn bushes, which kept catching one's clothes, hat, &c., and were most annoying; the day, too, was extremely hot and close.

We got on to the tracks of a good bull shortly after seven, and followed him till nearly midday over some very hard going.



He had evidently been badly scared, principally, I think, by the noise of falling stones, as he passed through more than one excellent place to lie up in. Shortly before noon we halted for about a couple of hours to rest ourselves and the kudu, and to give the latter a chance of lying up in some jungle which lay a short way ahead, and in the same direction in which his tracks were taking us. In this thick cover we eventually put him up, and I got an unsuccessful running shot at him when going through the trees, which were here very close together. I then ran up and along the hillside for some way to try and cut him off when crossing an open space. He had just passed across this, and had stopped on the other side behind a thick bush, where he was invisible, when I got up, somewhat unsteady after my run. We could not see the bull at first owing to the thick bush behind which he had concealed himself, but he suddenly "nipped" across from behind this bush and quickly got out of sight behind another



about 3 yards to the right. By the time I got the sights of the rifle on him there were only his hind-quarters to aim at, about 150 yards off and just disappearing. There was no answering thud to the bullet, and, though I hoped against hope, I could not help thinking I had missed. This fear proved only too true, for we could find no trace of blood on his tracks, and as he was now thoroughly scared we knew it was useless to follow him any further. I was much disappointed at losing this bull after having tracked him so far, and I felt that, given a little luck, I might have secured his head, even though I never got much of a chance at him.

On the way back to camp I shot another klipspringer with horns $3\frac{5}{16}$ inches long. This animal displayed very nearly the same tenacity of life as the one shot the previous day, which is remarkable in so small a creature. The flesh of the alicout is decidedly good, being tasty and tender, about the best venison I have eaten in Somaliland.



Curiously enough, very few of the natives will touch it.

The next day we saw nothing worth shooting, though we had men out in several directions during the morning, and in the afternoon Ali Borali and I went a long round and spied a lot of ground with the glasses.

The following morning, October 15th, we started at daybreak and, after descending the Ragger Pass, tried the small hills and broken ground which lie at its foot. Here we saw two different lots of kudu, but they were all females and young males with small horns. We then moved round to the left, halting at midday for a couple of hours without having seen any more. In the afternoon we worked our way slowly back to camp, walking along the bottom of the ravines and carefully examining both sides as we proceeded. Up to about five o'clock in the evening we had seen nothing, except some klipspringers, but about that hour several kudu appeared on our left, well up on the hillside. Once more I was disappointed, as there was only one small male with



immature horns among them. We had just started again, after having carefully examined this lot, and were moving quietly along the left bank of the nullah, when suddenly Ali Borali sighted a kudu bull, with a good head, on the opposite side, a short distance up among the bushes. He moved on at once, but when we had gone about 70 or 80 yards further, we again saw him. He was standing broadside towards us, about 100 yards off on the opposite slope, but he was partly hidden by trees. However, I managed to get a clear shot, hitting him just above the junction of the fore-leg with the shoulder. This was enough, as he rushed headlong downhill and fell before reaching the bottom. He was a very old beast, many of his teeth gone, and his skin much scarred. His horns measured $49\frac{3}{16}$ inches along the curve, $35\frac{3}{16}$ inches straight, circumference at base $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, tip to tip $25\frac{3}{8}$ inches. He thus made a very good pair to the first I had shot, his horns being just half an inch longer. I was very pleased, and considered myself lucky to get this bull, as we had not

followed his tracks, or even sighted him, but had suddenly come on him quite by chance. Had we passed that exact spot five minutes sooner or later than we did we might never have seen him at all. His shoulder was quite smashed up by the soft-nosed split Mauser bullet, which shows that this projectile, even though it will expand on such a soft substance as the stomach of a klipspringer, yet possesses sufficient substance and weight to break the shoulder of such a large animal as a greater kudu. I was more than satisfied with the performance of this rifle and bullet.

Having now reached the limit of my license of two greater kudu, and having also secured two specimens of the alicout, I determined to turn my attention to shooting, if possible, one or two baira. I had heard that some had been seen in the vicinity of my present camp, so next day, October 16th, I tried the ground near by, but saw none.

The day we arrived at Ragger Pass a man had come in and reported having seen a couple of baira on the low hills near where my



permanent camp, from which we had come, had been pitched. Accordingly we struck our tents early on the morning of October 17th and sent them back to our last halting-place, while Ali Borali and I, together with the guide, went to try the ground where the baira were said to have been seen.

We reached the low hills shortly after half-past eight, and about nine sighted three—two females and one male. They appeared to be very shy and were going up the side of a gentle slope, some 300 yards distant. As soon as they had disappeared over the top we went after them, and after spending some time in looking for their tracks, which were very hard to see on the stony ground, we found that they had gone down into a steep ravine, the bottom of which was overgrown with bushes. Whilst going cautiously along the edge we suddenly heard a noise beneath us, and the three baira rushed up out of the bushes and commenced to run up the opposite slope. They were then about 150 yards from us, and going fast, only stopping once or twice for an instant to look

back. By the time we were able to make out, with the aid of the glasses, which was the male, they had somewhat increased their distance, and presented a very small object at which to fire. Two shots knocked bits of stone over the buck. So close did the bullets strike I once thought I had hit him, but he disappeared over the crest, nor could we find any blood on his tracks, which led down into another ravine, at the bottom of which was the bed of a dry watercourse, the sides being thickly covered with stones.

Here we lost the trail for a time as I went down and examined the dry watercourse, but could find no signs of the baira having passed that way. Ali Borali now did quite the best bit of tracking I have ever seen him do. Finding the spoor on the stony side of the ravine, bit by bit he followed it out westward for nearly half a mile—a really very fine bit of work. However, we could make nothing of it after this, as the trail led us away again into more stony ground, where we eventually lost it completely. We had now almost resolved to

give it up and go back to camp, when suddenly the man with us spotted the baira on the edge of a ravine about 300 yards away. After a fairly easy stalk I got a chance at the male facing me at about 80 yards range. I had to take the shot standing, as I could not see him kneeling. The bullet hit the baira about half-way between the shoulder and hind-quarters, passing through the vitals and smashing one hind leg to bits. He ran a little way down-hill, but we experienced no difficulty in securing him. I was immensely pleased at my success, especially in finding the baira the second time, and I certainly owed a lot to my Shikari for his successful tracking over what really was very difficult ground to follow the spoor of so small an animal.

As I believe I am right in saying that very few of this species have been shot, I give the following description of the baira which was taken down by me on the spot in my note book, from which I now copy it verbatim :—

" *Horns—length :* Along curve $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, circumference at base $2\frac{3}{16}$ inches, tip to tip

$1\frac{15}{16}$ inches. Horns annulated about half-way up and curved *forward* like those of a miniature dibtag.

"*Body—dimensions:* Tip of nose to *root* of tail along curves of body 36 inches; tip of nose to tip of tail along curves of body $39\frac{1}{2}$ inches; height at shoulder, tip of hoof to spear stuck in ground at withers $25\frac{1}{2}$ inches; girth of chest $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

"*Body—colour:* Somewhat difficult to describe—a sort of steely greyish mauve with what might be termed a decided brownish tendency throughout. This continues along the back and down the sides to where the sides round off into the belly, where there is a sharp line of distinction, the hair now becoming a whitey brown, which is white under belly; *legs* reddish brown; *ears* very large, light brown, white inside; *face* red-brown—lighter underneath.

"*Hair:* Short and quite thin and fine—perfectly distinct from that of the alicout klipspringer."

I do not know if the foregoing description

will be of much interest, or if it is really accurate enough, as the colours are somewhat hard to describe, but, as I have said, it was taken down on the spot, and I now give it for what it may be worth.

I was fortunate enough to secure another specimen of this antelope that afternoon, when trying some low hills on the other side of camp. We had gone some way along the base of this range without seeing any, but about half-past five we found two—a male and a female—on the lower slopes, and about 200 yards off. We were somewhat uncertain at that distance as to which was the buck, but I had to chance it, as they had already seen us and were just about to move off. I fired kneeling, and the baira then bounded off up-hill, being joined by a third which had been feeding in some bushes close by. They again stopped at about 270 yards, when the male turned half round, thus giving me a broadside shot. I was able to lie down this time, and so got a perfectly steady aim. The buck leaped straight into the air and then

went over a slight undulation just in front. Ali Borali and the man with me raced after him, while I followed more leisurely, so as to be ready for another shot if necessary, but when I got up I found them both standing over the baira, which was quite dead, the bullet having caught him fairly behind the shoulder. His horns were slightly smaller than those of the other, being 4 inches in length, $1\frac{1}{16}$ inches in circumference at base, and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches between the tips.

The next morning we tried some jungle at the foot of the same hills. There was good cover with a certain amount of grass in this place, and soon after entering it we came on some fresh tracks which, from their size, looked like those of a greater kudu, but as it was just possible that they might be those of a lesser kudu we followed them up. In a short time they led into a thick patch of bushes round which Ali Borali and I went, taking our stand on the further side and leaving the man with us to follow the trail through. Shortly after taking up our positions we heard some large animal



forcing its way towards us, and, a few seconds later, there stepped out into the open, within 50 yards of where I stood, a *greater* kudu with quite a good head. For a moment he stood still, looking backwards and never seeing us, then slowly cantered away ; of course I could not fire, having already shot as many of his species as I was entitled to, but it was very tantalising, after all the hard work I had done to secure my second, thus to have another actually stand within 50 yards. Would I ever have got such a chance had I been able to avail myself of it? I think not.

We saw him very clearly, and, though he carried a good head, both of us were quite agreed that his horns were slightly shorter than those of the two kudu I had already killed.

After this we ascended the hills beyond where I had shot the baira the previous evening, and from there worked back to camp. We saw two more, but whether they were males or not we were unable to determine, as they were on the move when we sighted them, and, passing over a small undulation in the

ground, they disappeared from sight, nor could we find them again. I am inclined to think that they were the same two females which we had seen the previous evening, as the place in which we found them was only a short distance beyond where I had shot the male.

That afternoon I began my march back to Burao, as I had now got all I wanted.

On the way we tried another hill for baira, seeing one lot of five. These gave us a long stalk, only to find that they had moved on. After following them for over an hour, along the face of the hill, we got up to within 60 yards, when we discovered that there was only one young male with small horns amongst them. Leaving them, we then went straight to camp, which was not reached till after dark. On the way we came across a wild ass, the first I had seen in the country; but I did not fire at it. This animal can hardly be considered fair game, though possibly it might be allowable to shoot one as a specimen for a Natural History Collection. They are almost identically the same as the domestic donkey, but have striped



legs,[1] and this specimen, at any rate, seemed to be somewhat larger than his tame brother.

During the next morning's march I shot a geranook, with the longest horns I had yet got. We came on him in company with three or four females, shortly after half-past eight, and, after following them for a little over a quarter of an hour, I dropped him at about 150 yards range. His horns measured 14⅜ inches in length and 5¾ inches in circumference, and were a handsome pair, carrying their thickness well up towards the points.

In the afternoon we saw no less than six hunting leopards, or cheetahs—*Haramāāt* as the Somalis call them. We first sighted two in the scrub jungle, going off some way ahead, having already seen us. Ali Borali again did a fine piece of spooring, taking up the tracks on some very dry, hard ground where there were only the faintest marks to show which way the cheetahs had gone. These tracks we followed some distance till we thought they must have

[1] I have also observed that the tame donkeys in Somaliland frequently have striped legs.



given us the slip—in fact we were nearly turning back—when we saw them again, this time between 400 and 500 yards off. They had now been joined by four more, making six in all, and we did our very best to get within shot, but, unprovided with horses as we were, it was absolutely hopeless attempting to do so. Once, by stooping and running under cover of some friendly bushes, we contrived to get within about 300 yards, but they never stopped for an instant, still keeping on steadily through the thick scrub jungle. I almost wish now that I had chanced a long shot at that distance, but it would have been a very great fluke had I hit, and I was in hopes that I might possibly get nearer. It was not to be, however, as they gradually increased their pace and drew steadily away from us, finally disappearing in the jungle. Had only one of us been mounted he might have rounded up one of the cheetahs, but on foot, as we were, it was quite out of the question getting near them at all.

The next morning, October 20th, I arrived in Burao, which I had left on the 5th, having



Photo. by Author.

Geranook.

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been away just fifteen days, and shot 8 head of game, viz., 1 greater kudu, 1 geranook, 2 baira, 2 klipspringer, and 2 dhero. Two species, the klipspringer and the baira, were new, while the geranook was the best head of his kind I had yet secured. I now had specimens of all the different varieties of big game to be found in Somaliland, except the ostrich (which I had seen but never had a chance of shooting during my previous trip), and the water-buck and the bush-buck, neither of which is to be found nearer than the Webbe Shebeli River.

There appears to be a good stock of greater kudu on the hills near the Ragger Pass, and also on Wagger Mountain. True, I only saw three good bulls, but I also saw a fair number of young males with small horns, which should argue well for the future, now that the game regulations are in force, and the export of horns for sale strictly prohibited. I also came across a very large number of female kudu, too many in my opinion, and I would venture to suggest that, could it be done without the privilege being abused, a certain number, say about six



or eight, should be killed annually for the next three or four years, on the same principle as that on which hinds are regularly shot in the deer forests of Scotland. This, however, should be done with great care and discrimination, and every sportsman who is allowed to shoot any should be required to give as accurate an estimate as possible of the numbers he has seen on the ground. Should the kudu appear to show the slightest noticeable signs of diminishing, the killing of all females should be at once absolutely prohibited, and perhaps it would not be a bad plan to confine this shooting of cows entirely to the civil officials, who, being always on the spot, are better able to form a proper estimate of the stock on the ground.

The baira is, I believe, only found near Wagger Mountain, on the neighbouring plateau of Negegir, and also, I have heard, in one place near Zaila. Though it thus seems to have only a local distribution, there appears to be a fair stock of these animals in the places which they inhabit, as I saw some every time I went specially to look for them.



CHAPTER XV

General character of the Somali—Fully described by Major Swayne—Raising of Protectorate regiments—Somalis excellent camp servants, &c., both in 1895 and in 1901—Great endurance in marching—Somalis employed in Egypt as camel-drivers—Can do with but little food and water—His ideas about honesty—The Somalis' chief faults—Vanity—Examples—Cupidity—Aden prices and high wages given by shooting parties—Somali servants' wages compared with those of Indian servants—"Globe-trotters" and their ways—Great excitability of the Somali unfits him to be a regular soldier—Examples.

MAJOR SWAYNE, Royal Engineers, has, in his book, "Seventeen Trips to Somaliland," given such an excellent description of the Somali—of his manners, customs, and mode of life, and of his general character—that it would be useless attempting to improve on what he has said, even should one wish to do so. How true is all that he has written nobody can fully appreciate until he has had a



certain experience of the Somali over and above what can be acquired during the short time spent on a shooting trip. I should like, however, to make a few remarks on certain points that Major Swayne has not touched upon at all—or at any rate but slightly—more especially with reference to the employment of Somalis as regular soldiers, which, of course, had not been tried when "Seventeen Trips" was written. Now that all our African Protectorates are raising regiments for their own protection, some, if not all, of which are liable for general service also, this question as to the suitability of Somalis for military service becomes of some importance, especially as at the present moment a scheme for the raising of a regiment in the (Somali) Protectorate is under the consideration of the Foreign Office. Before saying any more I would like it to be distinctly understood that any remarks I make apply to the average Somali, *i.e.*, to the general run of those men that have come under my observation. There may be, and no doubt are, many exceptions, but even in



these cases I would quote the old saying that "exceptions prove the rule." In other words, the description of the average Somali applies in a greater or less degree to one and all, though of course there are many individuals in whom certain traits of character come out less (or more) prominently than in others. To any one who may read this chapter I would say, "To form a proper idea of the Somali character (as far as it is possible for a European to do so from books) read also, in conjunction with these remarks, all that Major Swayne has written, as it is not my intention to touch on any matters that have already been mentioned in 'Seventeen Trips.'"

My first experience of the Somali was gained in 1895, in which year I made a shooting trip into the south-western portion of the country. During this expedition I was for over two and a half months quite alone with my men. All this time I never had the slightest trouble with them. Willing and cheerful—even when rations were scarce—they served me admirably, and I never wish



to have better servants and more cheery companions than I had then; consequently, when I returned to the country in 1901 it was with a very good opinion of its inhabitants. This opinion I have never had occasion to alter in so far as it applies to the Somali's suitability for and capability of performing such work as he did for me in 1895. On several occasions in 1901 I was alone with them in camp—marching and shooting—and I found them just as good as I did before. All the time also that we were on service with the Field Force they did very well, on the whole, though some were not as good as others at loading camels; but these men improved considerably, especially towards the end. Taking all things into consideration, the length of some of our marches, the poorness of the grazing in many places and the consequent effect on the condition of our camels, the wear and tear on the loading gear, &c., I do not think that the rear guards ever had any excessive work to do in loading up breakdowns, bringing in stragglers and suchlike, though of



course some days were considerably worse than others.

The Somali is certainly a splendid marcher, and his powers of going long distances without water and with but little food are really remarkable, and I honestly do not think that any other men but Somalis could have done what our Levy men did on more than one occasion. Moreover, any men I have had out with me when shooting on the Golis Range were just as good on the hills as on the flat. This is decidedly uncommon, as the hill-man of India is not of much use in the plains, good as he is in his native mountains, and *vice versâ*. Of course the Golis Range in Somaliland cannot be compared even with the lower ranges of the Himalayas any more than the heat of the Haud can compare with that of the Indian plains. Still the walking one has to do when hunting greater kudu is quite severe enough to make it an entirely different exercise from walking and shooting on the flat.

As an instance of the Somalis' power of marching on short commons, both of food and

water, I may mention what they accomplished on the 17th of July, 1901—the day of the fight at Firdiddin. The whole force started at about 1.45 a.m. that morning and got back to camp at 8.50 p.m., having covered forty miles, fought a sharp action with the enemy, and driven back a large quantity of captured live stock. None of the Levy had any food at all till night, and but little water, yet not a man fell out. In addition to this, E and F Companies had eaten only a few dates the previous day, July 16th. On that day E Company had marched well over twenty miles, arriving in camp after dark with a convoy of water-tanks. We were then so close to the Mullah's position that we dared not allow any fires to be lighted for fear of giving the alarm. Consequently they could cook no meat that night after their march, but had to be content with a small allowance of dates.

F Company had only done between fourteen and fifteen miles, but at the midday halt, on being given their choice, they had said that they preferred to kill and cook their meat in



the evening. Our scouts had not then returned, and we did not know till later the exact position of the enemy, nor where we would camp that evening, therefore the men were allowed their choice as to their time of eating. When we did arrive in camp they, too, had to content themselves with a few dates, like E Company. Yet not a man of either of these two companies seemed to suffer at all from fatigue during the next day, although F Company was rear guard during the return to camp and had a lot of extra hard work driving camels in the dark.

The only point of endurance in which the Somali compares at all unfavourably with the native of India is in the matter of carrying loads; in this respect he certainly is not equal to the average coolie of the plains. This, however, is not to be wondered at, considering how different are the conditions of life in the two countries. All the same the Somali can at a pinch do a certain amount in this line also, as I have, on more than one occasion, seen a man carry to camp a greater kudu's head,

head skin, and horns—before skinning—over very steep ground too.

Somalis have, I believe, more than once been employed in Egypt as camel-men, principally, I think, in the various operations round Suakim, and I have always heard that they gave great satisfaction.

In the matter of supplies, too, they are easily accommodated. The Government rations issued to the Levy were 1 lb. rice, 8 oz. dates, and 2 oz. ghee daily; compare this with the rations of even an Indian regiment on service and the result is much in favour of the Somali. As a matter of fact we fed our men, during most of the time operations lasted, on mutton and camel flesh. They infinitely preferred the latter to anything else, saying it was much the most strengthening food they could get. This in itself was a distinct advantage, as eating camels, unlike any other "walking meat," can easily keep up with Infantry through the longest march, as of course they carry no loads.

As to water, we used to try and carry an

allowance of half a gallon per man per day for all purposes, including cooking. We generally managed to do this, but on several occasions the supply had to be cut down considerably; but this never seemed to affect the men.

To sum up his good points—the Somali is an excellent servant on a shooting trip, and, on the whole, a good transport man.

As a soldier he is a splendid marcher, requiring but little transport and capable of enduring great fatigue. He is plucky, cheerful, and easily led by any Sahib to whom he takes a liking. He is respectful also, and obedient to the white man. He is good-tempered, easily amused and kept in good-humour. He has sometimes been accused of sulkiness. I have certainly seen occasional displays of this failing in individuals, but it is decidedly rare, in my opinion, and even then the fit rarely lasts long, and I do not think it is fair to accuse the Somalis of being at all a sulky race.

He is honest, too, as far as his conception of the meaning of the word goes. This con-

ception fulfils also a good deal of what we mean by honesty—that is, you may entrust a Somali with, say, a bag of rupees to take a long distance and deliver safely to its owner; you may be out of your tent all day, leaving your own personal belongings lying about—including even money—without any anxiety as to their safety; and this, I am sorry to say, is a great deal more than I can say for the general run of the lower classes of my fellow-countrymen. But his ideas seem very different with regard to any Government or private property that is handed over to him *for his own use*, such as blankets, waterproof sheets, mats and ropes for loading camels, cooking utensils, &c. These articles having been procured for his benefit and issued to him, he seems to consider that they belong to him by right of use, even though he has never paid for them, and he will appropriate or pass them on to his friends in the most barefaced manner. In fact, he seems to regard them as his perquisite. This may be all very well in the case of a private shooting trip, as these things are gene-



[*Photo. by Lieut. Salmon.*

A Somali Soldier.

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rally given away, nobody caring to take away old blankets, mats, &c., with him once he leaves the country; but it becomes a different matter, and a very great nuisance, when you have to deal with Government property, for which you are responsible, and which cannot be given away. It is, however, all the same to the Somali—hence endless trouble and bother.

His ideas of *meum* and *tuum* with regard to camels are altogether different, and he seems to regard any camel, that is not his own, as his legitimate prey, and to consider that, if he can appropriate it without being found out he has thereby done the proper thing. Camels are, in fact, his fetish and his god, and their acquisition seems to be his main object in life. He seems to abide by—

> "The good old rule—the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power
> And they should keep who can."

This camel-worship is a trait in the national character that has gone on for countless gene-

rations, and which will take generations to disappear—if ever it does.

The Somali's chief faults are his inordinate vanity, his grasping greed, and his terrible excitability.

His vanity will perhaps be best exemplified by one or two instances that occurred during the formation and drilling of the force. The first happened at Berbera, when a quantity of Government stores for the use of the Levy were landed on the pier. These had all to be taken up to the fort, a distance of about a quarter of a mile from the pier, and the enlisted men who were then at Berbera were detailed as fatigue parties for this work. They all struck, refusing to do the carrying, not on the ground that it was beyond their strength, but because they had enlisted as soldiers, and were not going to do the work of coolies! It was explained to them that both in European and Native regiments the men carried their own stores, and that now they had become soldiers they would have to do likewise; it was also pointed out that white men thought

it no degradation. But no—they would not see it, and replied that white men or natives of India might have their own customs, but that Somalis were not going to demean themselves by doing porter's work. *Sic!* Eventually the difficulty was got over by Colonel Swayne, entirely through his own *personal* influence with the men and nothing else, and we had no further trouble over carrying stores. This was a ludicrous and trifling enough incident in itself, as I do not think the Sepoys meant any harm by it, and as they were all recruits of a few days' standing they had of course no idea as to the gravity of their offence, but it shows clearly what an exaggerated idea of his own importance the Somali has.

The other instance occurred at Eyl Humo, shortly after the arrival of the Indian contingent. Before they came all the drill of the Levy had to be carried out by Somali non-commissioned officers from the Military Police ; they had done their best, such as it was, but it was crude at that. When the Indian troops arrived they at once took in hand the drill, and

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is needless. It is this [illegible] exaggerated
idea of his own importance that makes the
Somali in some ways a difficult individual with
whom to deal. This phase of his character
may be summed up as childish and ridiculous.

It might reasonably be supposed that these people, being so proud, would, at any rate, have the compensating virtue of being comparatively indifferent to money, or at any rate



of not being as avaricious as those whose pride is less. Such, however, is not the case by any means, and the Somali, I am sorry to say, is far more grasping and avaricious than the native of India. How he comes to be so is another matter, but the fact remains that he is. This trait in his character is, I think, attributable to several causes: partly to the proximity of Aden and the high prices current there compared with India, of which Aden is a dependency; partly to the country having been exploited, so to speak, by such a large number of shooting parties, many of the members of which have been very wealthy men, some of whom, never having been out of England before, and therefore not knowing what to give, spoilt the market by over-paying; partly also to the vanity of the Somali himself, and his wish to enrich himself and become as important a personage as possible.

Aden is officially a part of India, being garrisoned by Indian troops from the Bombay Presidency, and by Garrison Artillery and a



British Infantry Regiment on the Indian establishment. Most, if not the whole of the trade, is in the hands of Parsee merchants, and Hindustani is commonly spoken—in fact it may be called the vernacular of the place; in other words, Aden is an Indian port, with a somewhat cosmopolitan population.

Up to 1899 Somaliland was administered from India through Aden by Indian political officers, and thus became a part of Hindustan; in this manner Indian ways and customs (and with them Aden prices) came into vogue in the Somali country, where they have remained till to-day; the coinage is in rupees, and Hindustani being spoken by very many Somalis is practically the official language of the country.

Compared with India, wages run high in Aden, as it is only to be expected that Indian servants should draw higher pay there than in their own country; but a good Indian servant is well worth it. Many Somalis go over to Aden, where they find employment in various ways, and where they also contrive, in some manner or other, to get nearly, if not quite, the



same wages as natives of India. There is no reason, however, why Somalis *in their own country* should receive free rations and wages that come to more than double what an Indian servant receives for doing the same work in India, and are more than he gets even in Aden. As body servants, cooks, and Syces (or grooms), Somalis are inferior to natives of India, and yet a Somali "boy," who cooks for you and looks after your kit in the jungles, expects from 25 to 30 rupees per month, besides free rations. The pay of a first Shikari is 40 rupees per month, and that of a second 30 rupees, and free rations as well—this, too, in their own country. Excellent as many Somali Shikaris are, I cannot allow that they are better than good Indians at this work. Thus it will be seen that Aden rates for Indian servants out of their own country have got to be customary for Somalis in their own country, as well as free rations after leaving the coast.

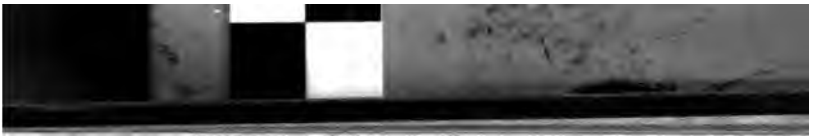
Very high wages and enormous rewards have also been paid by globe-trotters who



have shot in the country. Of course the givers had a legal right to spend their own money as they liked, but the result has been very hard on men who cannot afford to give the same, or who do not care to pay what is a perfectly absurd rate.

It is very quickly known that such and such a Sahib has given very big "bakshish" to his men, and the consequence is that every Somali expects to get the same, and is discontented and grumbles if he does not. Every European is supposed to possess unlimited wealth, and the result of these indiscriminate high payments is that any white man who does not give the same is looked upon as niggardly, and in many cases he cannot—or could not—get the best men at the recognised rates.

Such selfish conduct has conduced very greatly to the dislike which is undoubtedly felt towards the "globe-trotters" in general—at any rate in India. I have often heard complaints that Indian officials were averse to giving help to sportsmen visiting their districts. Can it be wondered at under these circum-



stances? I have shot in several different parts of India, and I have invariably, and without any exception whatsoever, received the very greatest kindness and hospitality, and all possible help from every district official I have met. At the same time I have heard, from these people themselves, several stories of the way certain visitors have behaved, and the very discourteous, not to say ungentlemanly, manner in which they have treated the district officers. It goes without saying that there are many thorough good fellows and good sportsmen who would never think of acting in this manner. I only relate what undoubtedly happens in many cases, and I feel sure that almost any Indian official who may read these pages will be able to confirm what I have said.

The direct result of all these high payments, combined with the high rate of wages in the country, has been to make the Somali, without exception, the most avaricious native I know, and he seems to regard every white man as a mine of gold, and to try to get the utmost farthing out of him that he can. This

characteristic is enough to make a great difference in the feelings with which one would otherwise regard the Somali; it is also sufficient to mar greatly your pleasure in shooting, as you know that any special bit of good luck you may experience will be regarded by every one who has had anything to do with it as a good excuse to get money out of you; this I have noticed over and over again.

The most serious fault in the Somalis' character, from a military point of view, is their excessive excitability. They seem on occasions to go quite off their heads, and to lose their reason for the time being. I have seen this more than once. At Firdiddin, for instance, many of our men were simply mad with excitement, some firing their rifles in the air, and it was quite impossible to get others to adjust their sights, as they were far too demented to listen to any orders once they got under fire. At Sanala also there were several cases of men firing straight into the air. We were able to keep them under better con-



trol on this occasion because each company was in a separate part of the Zariba ; moreover, we never allowed them to set their sights for over 500 yards, and when the enemy got to about 400 yards the order was given to fix bayonets, which has the effect of keeping the bullets low at fairly close ranges.

It may be urged that these men were only recruits, and had not been sufficiently drilled. This is to a certain extent true, but the average Somali is very quick at learning his drill, and they knew fairly well how to adjust their sights on the ranges, while at practice they would generally fire steady volleys, even with ball cartridge. But the moment the real thing came they simply went mad with excitement. I have seen just the same thing out shooting—an animal falls, and ninety-nine out of every hundred Somalis will rush straight in at it, stopping only, if they have no knife, to try and wrest yours from you by main force, simply speechless and trembling with excitement, even though they may have seen many animals killed before.

In my opinion this excitability is so deeply rooted in the Somali's nature as to be ineradicable, and it is so great as to preclude the likelihood of his ever being able to take his stand alongside Regular troops. In conclusion I will only say that I would be very sorry to be in a really tight place with Somalis only, if the result depended on fairly rapid compliance with orders, as I am perfectly certain that they would all be so much excited (even if they did not bolt) that it would be impossible to get them even to hear any orders for a considerable time after they had been given. As scouts and guides they should certainly prove useful, as they are adepts in all that pertains to finding their way through jungle. This the Somali certainly shines at, and this, in my opinion, is his best qualification for military service, and one of which special advantage should be taken. As a Regular soldier, smartly clothed, properly drilled and doing routine work, he will never, I think, prove a success. As an Irregular, however, preferably mounted either on riding camels or ponies, and used for scouting, keep-



ing touch with an enemy, raiding and generally harassing him, the Somali should prove as good as any Irregulars in the world.

They are on the whole plucky (though I have seen exceptions), but I think that the reputation the race seems to have acquired for universal bravery has been gained mainly from the courageous conduct of Shikaris, who are of course picked men.

CHAPTER XVI

Sport in Somaliland—Full details in "Seventeen Trips"—Provisions of the International Agreement for preservation of big game in Africa—Beneficial to sportsmen—Somali Protectorate regulations—Remarks on same—Proposed alterations—Greater and lesser kudu—Lion-shooting in Somaliland—The Somali's way of regarding depredations of lions—Plea for lions and appeal for their preservation—Disease amongst greater kudu.

THERE have been so many books published about shooting in Somaliland that it would be quite superfluous to attempt to write anything new on this subject. In the *Appendices* to "Seventeen Trips" will be found all information necessary as to the fitting out of a caravan, its cost, &c., also hints as to clothing, equipment, stores, and rifles.

I have therefore no wish to touch on any of these matters, but merely desire to point out for the benefit of any one intending to visit Somaliland, that the conditions under which



shooting parties are now allowed to proceed into the country have been somewhat modified, owing to the provisions of the International Agreement for the protection of big game in Africa, which was signed in London in 1900.

Every British Protectorate in Africa now has its own Game Laws and Regulations and game Reserves. The principles on which the regulations are framed are the same for all Protectorates, namely, to frame rules which will stop the wholesale slaughter of game which has been going on in Africa for many years past, and to form reserves in which no shooting at all is allowed, so as to afford a sanctuary, as it is called in Scotland, for all species.

The details vary in different countries, according to local conditions and the distribution of particular animals, certain species being absolutely preserved in some Protectorates, while in others they are allowed to be shot in limited numbers. It must also be remembered that in addition to the rifle, that terrible scourge, the rinderpest, has killed off

an almost incredible quantity of game in many places, buffalo, eland, and kudu being perhaps the greatest sufferers. It is therefore absolutely necessary to give certain species a chance of recovering, unless they are to be wiped off the face of the earth. In days to come, if these animals increase in number, the killing of a few specimens may again be allowed, but in the meantime it is most earnestly to be hoped that all true sportsmen will, by every means in their power, assist the Protectorate officials who are doing their best to enforce laws which must in time not only greatly benefit the animals that they have been framed to protect, but also prove a source of immense gratification to all lovers of the animal kingdom who do not wish to see the herds of game, that have existed since time immemorial, swept away never to return. These regulations should appeal, in fact, to all those who love the jungle or the desert for its own sake, and who can look on a landscape without the one sordid and mercenary idea of "How much money can be made out of this country?"

A copy of the Somali Protectorate Game Regulations is placed at the end of this chapter. They explain themselves, and it will be seen that a very liberal allowance of heads is given to all who take out a licence.

It will be observed that every one who comes to the country for the purpose of shooting has to pay 500 rupees (equivalent to £33) for the privilege. This undoubtedly increases the expense of a trip, but, on the other hand, it will most certainly help towards the preservation of game in more ways than one. A full return has also to be rendered of all game shot on each licence, and as the holder has to sign a declaration that this return is a full and true one in every particular, there is a certain control over him.

With regard to the actual numbers allowed to be shot, I think that the clause which permits *ten* of each species of antelope and gazelle (except greater and lesser kudu and oryx) ought to be altered to *six*. Nobody can possibly want more than six specimens of any one variety, and if he uses any care or dis-

crimination in what he shoots, he ought, with anything but the worst of luck, to get at least two good heads out of the six. "Dhero" might be allowed to remain as at present (*i.e.*, ten to be allowed on each licence), because there are two varieties, the Somali lowland gazelle, (*Gazella pelzelui*), which very much resembles the Indian chinkara, and the Somali plateau gazelle (*Gazella spekei*) which differs from *Gazella pelzelui* in having a very prominent fold of loose skin just over the nostrils. In addition to this the dhero is certainly the commonest species of game in the country, if the dik dik be excepted, and it would be quite possible to shoot three or four dhero without getting a good head, half to three-quarters of an inch in length making a great difference in a horn.

Wart hog, too, should be reduced from ten to six, or even to four. There can be no possible excuse for killing anything like ten. No Somali will even lay his hands on a pig—far less eat it—therefore the flesh is invariably wasted : it is very rare to get a really good

head, and every specimen shot will have to be decapitated, skinned, cleaned, and packed daily on a camel by the European who kills it. They are not hard to shoot, affording, as a rule, easy chances, but it is possible, by all accounts, to get very fair sport by riding them—good pig-sticking having been obtained by more than one sportsman in Somaliland.

The limit for oryx might, I think, be raised from two to four. They are certainly more numerous than kudu—whose limit also is two—though not so common as some of the other species.

Every effort is being made to preserve kudu, both greater and lesser, and Somaliland is one of the only countries where they do not seem to have been affected by rinderpest—the greater kudu at any rate—while the lesser kudu is quite one of the rarer African antelopes, there being comparatively few places, I believe, where it is to be found.

I would suggest that a fine of from 30 to 50 rupees (*i.e.*, from £2 to £3 odd) be inflicted, under conditions, for every greater kudu killed

whose horns measure less than 43 inches round the curve. This would make men a great deal more careful before they shot a specimen, and it would make their Shikaris much more cautious about telling their masters that the kudu before them was a "burra wallah"—*i.e.*, a big one. I saw a very fair number of bulls in 1901, but big heads were scarce: all the same, with care and perseverance, at least one of from 46 to 49 inches, if not longer, ought to be got. It is often somewhat difficult to judge the length of a kudu's horns at any distance, and of course mistakes are sometimes unavoidable, so a head under 43 inches may occasionally be shot under the impression that it is a good deal larger, so it would hardly be fair to inflict a fine for a man's first specimen; but there should be no excuse for shooting a second immature kudu. Nobody who kills so small a head can have much pride in it afterwards, and the very fact of having already shot such an indifferent specimen should make the slayer extremely careful about the next. Therefore I would



[*Photo. by Lieut. Salmon.*

Scene at Mandera.

[*To face page* 288.



suggest that the fine mentioned should invariably be inflicted if a second small pair of horns under 43 or 44 inches be killed by the same individual. It is rare to get a head very much over 51 or 52 inches round the curve in the Somali country.

Somaliland has earned a reputation as a shooting ground principally from the number of lions that have been killed there, and it will be observed that no limit is placed on the number that may be shot on a license. It may be argued that it would not be right to put a stop to the killing of dangerous and destructive animals. According to this theory, men who go out lion-hunting do so out of purely philanthropic motives, incurring great expense, enduring considerable fatigue, and exposing themselves to no little danger, merely to rid the country of lions! Was there ever such a silly argument? If a lion really takes to man-eating, as has unfortunately happened in too many instances near the Uganda Railway, then of course he must be got rid of as soon as possible; but in Somaliland it is extremely

rare to hear of a lion doing this—certainly I have never heard of a bad case. They do kill a certain number of goats, sheep, and camels, but they feed a great deal more on game than do the cattle-lifting tigers of India; besides which the Somali can much more easily afford this loss out of his live stock than can the average ryot in India.

I had an idea at one time that Somalis welcomed the European sportsman as one who saved them from much loss when he shot any lions that had taken to man or cattle-killing, and that they would be happy to help him only for the sake of getting rid of the so-called noxious animals. I saw this stated in a review of one of the first books on sport in the country, and I thought it a very plausible notion. When shooting in 1895 I began to have very serious doubts as to the correctness of this theory, and when I killed the three lions in April, 1901, all uncertainty I had speedily vanished. I foolishly imagined that I had done a certain amount of service to the people of that Karia; but they thought otherwise, and I was fairly mobbed for



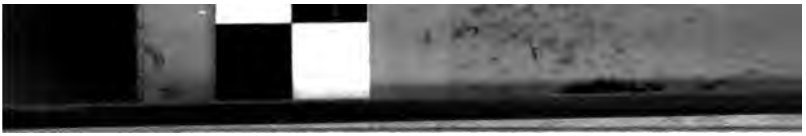
"bakshish." This greatly disgusted me, and took away much of my pleasure in the shoot. I mentioned all this to Ali Borali, my Shikari, some time after, asking him what he thought of it. "Oh," he replied, "those people did not think it a service. If it is the will of Allah that a man or a camel is to be killed, then it will be killed—it must be killed; these people were only too pleased to get the reward from you—Sahibs always pay very much money for lions." I have not the slightest doubt he spoke the truth, and that the Somali really values a lion as so much prospective gain from sportsmen, and that he looks upon the death of men or live stock as "fate," and quite another matter. I honestly and truly believe that this is the light in which the matter is regarded, and I cannot see why an indiscriminate slaughter of lions should be allowed on the plea of their doing harm.

It should also be remembered that it was to a great extent the prospects of lion-hunting that first brought British sportsmen into the country in any numbers, and it was this meet-

ing with the very best type of man, on the whole, that our country can produce, that has caused the Somali to look up to us, as he undoubtedly does. He may regard us as a legitimate prey in the way of money, but he *does* respect the English Sahib.

As I have already pointed out, I believe that the Somali would be sorry to have lions exterminated in his country. He has been accustomed to their depredations for generations, and he looks upon them as a part of the will of Allah and therefore inevitable, while the money that the sportsman spends is a pure asset to him, which he would never get were it not for the lion.

I am afraid it is a somewhat difficult task to make out a favourable case for the king of beasts, but I have done my best, and if my arguments have failed let me appeal to the sporting instincts of my fellow-countrymen to look upon a lion *not* as noxious vermin, to be killed without mercy upon every possible occasion, but to regard him as what he is in many ways, namely, the finest trophy to be got



in Africa, and the one most thought of at home. Similarly let him *not* endeavour to shoot as many as possible—males, females, and cubs indiscriminately—for the simple sake of being able to say, " I have killed so many lions," which surely is but a sorry boast. Rather let him spare all cubs (who would care to show a half-grown cat-skin to a friend?) and let females alone after he has shot two or three—a lioness is not such a fine trophy, after all ; then let him kill as many males in reason as he can in a sportsmanlike manner, and I wish him the best of luck.

A really fine lion with a good mane when well set up makes a magnificent trophy, and one that any one may well be proud of, and it was of this I was thinking when I said that he was the " finest trophy to be got in Africa."

Let the big game hunter give *felis Leo* a chance, and remember that he shoots for *sport*, and not to exterminate his quarry. Let him remember the genuine pleasure that he feels when he shoots a lion, and let him think of others and leave something for them.

If this appeal does any good and spares the life of only one cub, I shall be well pleased, and shall feel that I have not written in vain.

Since writing the foregoing chapter the greater kudu have begun to suffer from the rinderpest, and many are reported to have died, more especially in the Mirso district, and on the ground near Gan Libah. This news is perfectly distressing, and it is the more to be regretted as this species, after having been very much shot, appeared to have every chance of doing well consequent upon the operation of the new Game Laws, which stop the export of its horns for sale, and strictly prohibit all natives from killing any kudu at all. How great an effect this outbreak of disease will have cannot yet be determined, but I fear that the kudu will suffer greatly, as I myself have seen several pairs of horns brought in belonging to animals which have succumbed to this terrible scourge.

Appendix

[Draft Regulations submitted in Colonel Hayes Sadler's Despatch No. 35 of the 20th March, 1901, approved by Lord Lansdowne, and sent out for issue June, 1901.]

SOMALILAND.

NOTICE.

THE following Regulations made by His Majesty's Consul-General, and allowed by the Secretary of State, are published for general information.

(Signed) J. HAYES SADLER,
His Majesty's Consul-General.

Berbera, 10*th July*, 1901.

Appendix

KING'S REGULATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 32 OF "THE SOMALILAND ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1899."

No. 3 of 1901.

Preservation of Game.

1. IN these Regulations—

"Hunt, kill, or capture" means hunting, killing, or capturing by any method, and includes every attempt to kill or capture.

"Hunting" includes molesting.

"Game" means any animal mentioned in any of the Schedules.

"Public officer" means a European officer in the public service of the Somaliland Protectorate, or an officer of one of His Majesty's ships visiting the coast.

"Native" means any native of Africa not being of European or American race or parentage.

"Settler" means a person for the time being resident in the Protectorate not being a public officer or a native.

"Sportsman" means a person who visits the Protectorate wholly or partly for sporting purposes, not being a public officer, settler, or native.

"Consular Officer" means the Principal Consular Officer in charge of a district of the Protectorate.

"Schedule" and "Schedules" refer to the Schedules annexed to these Regulations.

General Provisions.

2. No person, unless he is authorised by a special licence in that behalf, shall hunt, kill, or capture any of the animals mentioned in the First Schedule.



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3. No person, unless he is authorised by a special licence under these Regulations, shall hunt, kill, or capture any animal of the kinds mentioned in the Second Schedule if the animal be—

(*a*) Immature ; or

(*b*) A female accompanied by its young.

4. No person, unless he is authorised under these Regulations, shall hunt, kill, or capture any animal mentioned in the Third Schedule.

5. The Consul-General may, if he thinks fit, by Proclamation, declare that the name of any species, variety, or sex of animal, whether beast or bird, not mentioned in any Schedule hereto, shall be added to a particular Schedule, or that the name of any species or variety of animal mentioned or included in one Schedule shall be transferred to another Schedule, and, if he thinks fit, apply such declaration to the whole of the Protectorate or restrict it to any district or districts in which he thinks it expedient that the animal should be protected.

6. No person shall within the Protectorate sell, or purchase, or offer, or expose for sale any ostrich eggs or any head, horns, skin, or flesh of any animal mentioned in any of the Schedules, unless the ostrich or animal has been kept in a domesticated state ; and no person shall knowingly store, pack, convey, or export any part of any animal which he has reason to believe has been killed or captured in contravention of these Regulations.

7. If any person is found to be in possession of any elephant's tusk weighing less than 11 lbs., or any ivory being, in the opinion of the Court, part of an elephant's tusk which would have weighed less than 11 lbs., he shall be guilty of an offence against these Regulations, and the tusk or ivory shall be forfeited unless he proves that the tusk or ivory was not obtained in breach of these Regulations.

8. Where it appears to the Consul-General that any method used for killing or capturing animals is unduly destructive, he may, by Proclamation, prohibit such

method or prescribe the conditions under which any method may be used ; and if any person uses any method so prohibited, or uses any method otherwise than according to the conditions so prescribed, he shall be liable to the same penalties as for a breach of these Regulations.

9. Save as provided by these Regulations, or by any Proclamation under these Regulations, any person may hunt, kill, or capture any animal not mentioned in any of the Schedules.

Game Reserves.

10. The areas described in the Fifth Schedule hereto are hereby declared to be game reserves.

The Consul-General, with the approval of the Secretary of State, may, by Proclamation, declare any other portion of the Protectorate to be a game reserve, and may define or alter the limits of any game reserve, and these Regulations shall apply to every such game reserve.

Save as provided in these Regulations, or by any such Proclamation, any person who, unless he is authorised by a special licence, hunts, kills, or captures any animal whatever in a game reserve, or is found within a game reserve under circumstances showing that he was unlawfully in pursuit of any animal, shall be guilty of a breach of these Regulations.

Licences to Europeans, &c.

11. The following licences may be granted by the Consul-General or any Consular officer or such person or persons as may be authorised by the Consul-General, that is to say :—

(1) A sportsman's licence ;
(2) A public officer's licence ; and
(3) A settler's licence.

The following fees shall be payable for licences, that is to say, for a sportsman's licence, 500 rupees,



and for a public officer's or a settler's licence, 100 rupees.

Every licence shall be in force for one year only from the date of issue.

Provided that a public officer's licence may be granted for a single period of 14 consecutive days in one year on payment of a fee of 30 rupees.

Every licence shall bear in full the name of the person to whom it is granted, the date of issue, the period of its duration, and the signature of the Consul-General, Consular officer or other person authorised to grant licences.

The applicant for a licence may be required to give security by bond or deposit, not exceeding 2,000 rupees, for his compliance with these Regulations, and with the additional conditions (if any) contained in his licence.

A licence is not transferable.

Every licence must be produced when called for by any officer of the Protectorate Government.

In granting licences under these Regulations a Consular officer or any person authorised to grant licences shall observe any general or particular instructions of the Consul-General.

12. A sportsman's licence and a public officer's licence respectively authorise the holder to hunt, kill, or capture animals of any of the species mentioned in the Third Schedule, but unless the licence otherwise provides, not more than the number of each species fixed by the second column of that Schedule.

The holder of a sportsman's or public officer's licence granted under these Regulations may by the licence be authorised to kill or capture additional animals of any such species on payment of such additional fees as may be prescribed by the Consul-General.

13. A settler's licence authorises the holder to hunt, kill, or capture animals of the species and to the number mentioned in the Fourth Schedule only.

14. A public officer's licence shall not be granted except to a public officer, save that the Consul-

General may issue a limited number of public officer's licences to military officers of the Aden Garrison. A settler's licence shall not be granted except to a settler, but a sportsman's licence may be granted to a settler.

15. Where it appears proper to the Consul-General for scientific or administrative reasons, he may grant a special licence to any person, not being a native, to kill or capture animals of any one or more species mentioned in any of the Schedules, or to kill, hunt, or capture in a game reserve specified beasts or birds of prey, or other animals whose presence is detrimental to the purposes of the game reserve, or in particular cases, to kill or capture, as the case may be, in a game reserve, an animal or animals of any one or more species mentioned in the Schedules.

A special licence shall be subject to such conditions as to fees and security (if any), number, sex, and age of specimens, district and season for hunting, and other matters as the Consul-General may prescribe.

When the Consular officer, or other European officer of the Protectorate Government, in a district comprising a game reserve, is the holder of a public officer's licence, the Consul-General may grant a special licence authorising the officer to hunt, kill, or capture, in the game reserve, such animals as may be allowed by his public officer's licence.

Save as aforesaid, the holder of a special licence shall be subject to the general provisions of these Regulations, and to the provisions relating to holders of licences.

16. Every licence-holder shall keep a register of the animals killed or captured by him in the form specified in the Seventh Schedule.

The register shall be submitted as often as convenient, but not less frequently than once in three months, to the nearest Consular officer, who shall countersign the entries up to date.

Any person authorised to grant licences may at



any time call upon any licence-holder to produce his register for inspection.

Every person holding a sportsman's licence shall likewise before leaving the Protectorate submit his register to the Consular officer of the port from which he embarks.

If any holder of a licence fails to keep his register truly he shall be guilty of an offence against these Regulations.

17. The Consul-General may revoke any licence when he is satisfied that the holder has been guilty of a breach of these Regulations or of his licence, or has connived with any other person in any such breach, or that in any matters in relation thereto he has acted otherwise than in good faith.

18. The Consul-General may at his discretion direct that a licence under these Regulations shall be refused to any applicant.

19. Any person whose licence has been lost or destroyed may obtain a fresh licence for the remainder of his term on payment of a fee not exceeding one-fifth of the fee paid for the licence so lost or destroyed.

20. No licence granted under these Regulations shall entitle the holder to hunt, kill, or capture any animal, or to trespass upon private property without the consent of the owner or occupier.

21. Any person who, after having killed or captured animals to the number and of the species authorised by his licence, proceeds to hunt, kill, or capture any animals which he is not authorised to kill or capture, shall be guilty of a breach of these Regulations, and punishable accordingly.

22. Persons in the employment of holders of licences may, without licence, assist such holders of licences in hunting animals, but shall not use fire-arms.

In any case of a breach of these Regulations, the licence of every licence-holder concerned in the breach shall be liable to forfeiture, and such licence-holder shall be guilty of an offence.



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23. The Consul-General or any person authorised by him in that behalf may, at his discretion, require any person importing fire-arms or ammunition that may be used by such person for the purpose of killing game or other animals to take out a licence under these Regulations, and may refuse to allow the fire-arms or ammunition to be taken from the public warehouse until such licence is taken out. Save, as aforesaid, nothing in these Regulations shall affect the provisions of "The Somaliland Fire-arms Regulations, 1900."

Restrictions on Killing Game by Natives.

24. Except as regards the animals mentioned in Schedule 1, and larger and lesser kudu, the killing of which by natives will be prohibited, the provisions of these Regulations as to the killing of animals other than in the reserve will not for the present be applied to the inland tribes who have hitherto been accustomed to depend on the flesh of wild animals for their subsistence.

Legal Procedure.

25. Where any public officer of the Somaliland Protectorate thinks it expedient for the purposes of verifying the register of a licence-holder, or suspects that any person has been guilty of a breach of these Regulations, he may inspect and search, or authorise any subordinate officer to inspect and search, any baggage, packages, waggons, tents, building, or caravan belonging to or under the control of such person or his agent; and if the officer finds any heads, tusks, skins, or other remains of animals appearing to have been killed, or any live animals appearing to have been captured, in contravention of these Regulations, he shall seize and take the same before a Magistrate to be dealt with according to law.

26. Any person who hunts, kills, or captures any animal in contravention of these Regulations, or other-



wise commits any breach of these Regulations, shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine which may extend to 1,000 rupees, and, where the offence relates to more animals than two, to a fine in respect of each animal which may extend to 500 rupees, and in either case to imprisonment which may extend to two months, with or without a fine.

In all cases of conviction, any heads, horns, tusks, skins, or other remains of animals found in the possession of the offender or his agent, and all live animals captured in contravention of these Regulations, shall be liable to forfeiture.

If the person convicted is the holder of a licence, his licence may be revoked by the Court.

27. Where in any proceeding under these Regulations any fine is imposed, the Court may award any sum or sums not exceeding half the total fine to any informer or informers.

Repeal, &c.

28. All previous Regulations as to the killing of game in the Protectorate are hereby repealed.

29. The forms of licences appearing in the Schedule hereto, with such modifications as circumstances require, may be used.

30. These Regulations may be cited as " The Somaliland Game Regulations, 1901."

Berbera, 10*th July*, 1901.

(Signed) J. HAYES SADLER,
His Majesty's Consul-General.

Allowed :

(Signed) LANSDOWNE,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Appendix

SCHEDULES.[1]

First Schedule.

ANIMALS not to be hunted, killed, or captured by any person except under special licence :—

1. Mountain zebra.
2. Giraffe.
3. Eland.
4. White-tailed gnu.
5. Wild ass.
6. Buffalo.
7. Elephant, female or young.
8. Vulture, any species.
9. Secretary-bird.
10. Owl, any species.
11. Rhinoceros-bird, or beef-eater (*Buphaga*), any species.
12. Ostrich, female or young.

Second Schedule.

Animals, the females of which are not to be hunted, killed, or captured when accompanied by their young, and the young of which are not to be captured except under special licence :—

1. Rhinoceros.
2. Zebra, other than the mountain zebra.
3. All antelopes and gazelles.

Third Schedule.

Animals, limited numbers of which may be killed

[1] These Schedules may contain the names of species or varieties not found, or only occasionally found, in Somaliland.

or captured under a sportsman's or public officer's licence :—

Kind.	Number allowed.
1. Elephant, male	2
2. Rhinoceros	2
3. Zebras, other than the mountain zebra	2
4. Antelopes and gazelles—	
Class (A)—	
Oryx *(Oryx Beisa)*	2
Strepsiceros *(Kudu)*	2
Strepsiceros Imberbis	2
5. Cheetah *(Cynælurus)*	2
6. Aard-wolf *(Proteles)*	2
7. Smaller monkeys of each species ...	2
8. Ostrich, male only	2
9. Marabous...	2
10. Egret	2
11. Antelopes and gazelles—	
Class (B)—	
Any species other than those in class (A)	10
12. Wild pig, of each species	10
13. Smaller cats	10

Fourth Schedule.

Animals, limited numbers of which may be killed or captured under a settler's licence :—

Kind.	Number of animals allowed.
1. Wart hog *(Phacochœrus)*	10
2. The following antelopes and gazelles only—	
(i.) Grant's gazelle	5 animals in all in any calendar month, made up of animals of a single species or of several.
(ii.) Thomson's gazelle	
(iii.) Hartebeeste *(Bubalis swaynei)*...	
(iv.) Klipspringer *(Oreotragus)* ...	
(v.) Clarke's gazelle *(Ammodorcus clarkei)*	
(vi.) Waller's gazelle *(Lithocranius walleri)*	

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Fifth Schedule.

Game Reserve.

1. The area known as the "Mirso" lying to the north of the Golis range between a line drawn from Lower to Upper Sheikh on the east to Hafafa on the west.

2. The area bounded by a line running from Laferug through Mandeira and the Jerato Pass to Syk, Talawa Yer, and Hargaisa, thence following the line of the Hargaisa River to Haraf, thence to Sattawa at the intersection of the 10th meridian with 44° east longitude, and thence along the 10th meridian to its starting-point to Laferug.

Sixth Schedule.

No. 1.—*Sportsman's Licence* (*fee*, 500 *rupees*); *or Public Officer's Licence* (*Fee*, 100 *rupees*).

A. B., of , is hereby licensed to hunt, kill, or capture wild animals within the Somaliland Protectorate for one year from the date hereof, subject to the provisions and restrictions of "The Game Regulations, 1901."

The said *A. B.* is authorised, subject to the same Regulations, to kill or capture the following animals in addition to the number of the same species allowed by the Regulations, that is to say :—

Fee paid, rupees.

Dated this day of , 1901.

(Signed)

Consul-General (*or Consular Officer*).

No. 2.—*Settler's Game Licence* (*fee*, 100 *rupees*).

C. D., of , is hereby licensed to hunt, kill, or capture wild animals within the district of the Somaliland Protectorate for one year from



the date hereof, but subject to the provisions and restrictions of "The Game Regulations, 1901."

Dated this day of , 1901.

(Signed)

Consul-General (or Consular Officer).

SEVENTH SCHEDULE.

Game Register.

Species.	Number.	Sex.	Locality.	Date.	Remarks.

I declare that the above is a true record of all animals killed by me in the Protectorate under the licence granted me on the , 190 .

Passed , 190 .

(Signature of Examining Officer.)





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